

RULES FOR SUCCESS IN THE CONTEMPORARY ART WORLD

My meteoric rise to success in the art world has left many of my struggling artist friends shaking their heads (and fists). They ask me over and over, “Earl, how could you, an untrained elderly, Jewish, straight person have become an overnight success in the fiercely competitive and severely overcrowded contemporary art world?”

The answer is quite simple. Artists are made not born. The art world is a very competitive business and I set out to “shop the competition.” I visited many, many museums and galleries so I could see what was hot and what was not. I took what is hot and copied and adapted it. And, the rest is history.

I decided to write this book to help to the legions of struggling artists and to make a few bucks for myself. So all you have to do is follow a few simple Rules and you can be as successful as I am. How does that sound to you? I thought so.

This book is written in a sort of “Paint by Numbers” style. And, as an added feature, I have numbered all the Rules in chronological order to make it even easier to follow. This book is lush with color photographs of my award-winning work and of other artists’ work that I have copied.

I am so sure that you, the reader, will find almost instant success in the art world that I am offering a money-back guarantee. However, if you skip any page in this book I cannot be held responsible for the consequences.

Rule # 1

MORE IS BETTER. What first struck me in my visits to contemporary art museums and galleries was that the exhibition of hundreds, or better yet, thousands of some objects transforms the mass into a work of art.

The epitome of the More is Better School is the permanent exhibition by a prestigious museum of 140 tons of just plain dirt covering 3,600 square feet of indoor floor space in New York City. You must have seen other examples, not as stupendous, but what can you say about 35,000 clay figures in one space, 10,000 pennies (coated with honey) piles of candy, fortune cookies (often in one corner), tons of compacted cars, bales of cotton. The more the merrier.

I asked myself "Earl, why is this art?" The answer, it seemed to me, is that it's art because the artist, curator and art critic can write endless paragraphs in *Artspeak* explaining the true meaning of all that dirt. The complex explanation makes it art.



The author sits proudly astride bales of cardboard that are fresh from the compactor. One bale would be trash; 50 bales turn it into art. Some people think this is my best piece, and who am I to argue with my fans.

Rule # 2.

LESS IS MORE. Minimalism is big! My favorite example is an empty room that was shown as a work of art in a prestigious museum. It's possible that the museum was just changing its installation; but the empty room drew rave reviews from the critics --- and the janitor was promoted to head curator.

This is such an important Rule that it merits a personal example to drive home the point --- especially to those of my readers who are not too “swift of foot.” To illustrate this point I created a blank cage (less is more, duh) with a TV camera hooked up to show the inside of the empty cage on the monitor outside. A few visitors to the museum went inside of the cage and then rushed outside to see if they could catch a glimpse of themselves on the TV inside the cage. Very few were swift enough.

This piece won first prize (\$1,000) at a museum in Florida in a competition judged by a very famous curator with the initials T.G. Here we are, only on Rule # 2 and I’ve shown you how to win \$1,000.



Rule # 3.

IT IS BETTER TO COPY THAN TO CRITICIZE. When the genius who first painted a canvas with all white paint became famous it would have been easy for any bystander to stand by and criticize it. One smart artist, went out to the nearest art store, bought a canvas and painted it all blue. Rule # 3 speaks for itself i.e. aspiring artists shouldn't cast aspersions, just adapt (copy).

I created two canvases (see below) that capture the spirit of one man's view of some aspects of contemporary art. I sold them to some rich collector who displays them in his living room.



IF THIS WERE
HANGING IN A
MUSEUM
IT WOULD BE
FINE ART

IF THIS WERE
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HANGING
IN A MUSEUM

Rule # 4.

INFUSE DEEP PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANING INTO your work of art and this will put you in a class by yourself. Subtly hidden references to Freudian and Jungian concepts, Oedipal complex and dream symbols add a certain “Je ne sais quoi” that no curator or art critic is able to resist.



I saw this photograph of a psychiatrist's office in Architectural Digest and copied it piece by piece in my studio. I couldn't sell it to a museum so I offered it for sale in a leading medical journal, "Shrink".

I got quite a few replies, but frankly the respondents didn't seem too stable.

Rule # 5.

USE LIVE ANIMALS AND INSECTS IN YOUR INSTALLATIONS. Crawling ants, oinking pigs, flying pigeons, swimming fishes and clucking chickens have raised ordinary pieces of art to museum-class status. I never saw a piece of art that includes live animals that wasn't in a museum or a top gallery. Thousands of visitors paid good money to see a pigsty at a famous Venice biennale. One pig farmer from Iowa tried to get his money back, to no avail. He plans to have his own biennial back home, and is doing a mailing to all curators.

Rule # 5B.

USE DEAD ANIMALS. For those of you who are squeamish about using live animals in your installations, some art schools in England have a course (Macabre 101) that gives instruction in the use of dead animals. Students learn to place large animals in glass tanks filled with formaldehyde. I know one famous Brit who got an A+ in this course.

Dead or alive, use animals.

I predict the next great art movement will be to paint live animals. I found it quite difficult to get the sheep to hold still while I painted them.



Rule # 6

YOU GOTTA HAVE BALLS

LOTS AND LOTS AND LOTSA BALLS. That's what Boston-based artist Danny O found was the key to his getting a show at Mass MoCA's gigantic exhibition venue. I quote from the museum's description of his installation titled "Ball Walk". This is a very lengthy article, but I don't think you can appreciate contemporary art without reading every word:

Ball Walk is a project to create a work of art and at the same time set a record for the largest collection of found balls in the world. There are currently 7,000 balls installed in the work at MASS MoCA and the artist is asking for the community's help in filling the gallery with balls by the end of the summer. He estimates it will take approximately 16,000 balls to fill the space.

Danny O believes that the found ball is the "highest form in the found object family," its shape symbolic of the planet connecting the inner with the outer world. Of all shapes O says, "The sphere emanates the most joy and is the one perfect shape." O breathes life into these balls believing they have "personalities" of their own; they mirror "a family complete from the babies (superballs, small bobbles) through to the grandfather and grandmother (old, weathered, cracked and aged balls.)"

The process of ball collecting is deeply meaningful to Danny O. It is a meditative quest that takes the artist to parks, rivers, beaches and behind fences. His art follows natural process, his art being one of discovery, recovery and recyclability. His art is undeniably linked to the world it cleans up; as O agrees, it is an "aestheticizing of recycling."

I think it took a lot of balls for the curator at MASS MoCA to put on this show and write this introduction.

Rule # 7

IT IS OK TO PLAY WITH MATCHES. Leave it to Santiago Sierra to light up the art world once again --- this time literally. In 1997 he made a piece called *Gallery Burned With Gasoline* and, you guessed it, he used petrol and blow torches to char to a crisp the walls, ceilings, doors and windows of a newly-renovated gallery in Mexico City.

Sierra now teaches Arson 101 to M. F. A. students at U.C.L.A. See photo below of him lecturing eager future artists.



Riding on the crest of fame he received for this attack on a gallery, in 2002 he wrecked havoc on a gallery in Berlin by forcing 12 giant metal beams through its walls and windows.

An art writer for Frieze magazine wrote that both pieces:

“... aimed to undermine the neutrality of the gallery and to obstruct its function within the contemporary art market. The fact that individual beams and photographs of the installation are available for purchase, however, confuses Sierra’s position, making the works as puzzling and thought provoking as his previous more overtly political works. The artist straddles both sides of the problems he highlights; he refuses to declare his position and offers no solutions, deftly confounding accusations of both didacticism and exploitation.”

Editor’s note: I think that pretty well sums it up.

Rule # 8.

VIDEO IS BIG, BIG, BIG. Go out and buy a video camera today. I've seen some of the strangest videos in the most prestigious museums. You need to buy a lot of projectors so you can have more than one video playing at a time. If you can't make a video, you'll never make it.



I must admit that video is not my strongest field, but you must be capable in all disciplines to get your M.F.A.

I used crushed beer cans to make this sculpture and put a TV monitor in his head. I interviewed homeless people in Miami and played the tape. August Busch III bought it for his office.

Rule # 9

HOW TO MAKE “PROCESS” WORK FOR YOU. There is nothing bigger in the contemporary art world than *process*, which refers to a series of repetitive actions in the construction of a piece of art. The longer it takes, the more mundane the task, the more commonplace the object used, the more monotonous the activity, the more it is adored by curators and art critics.

Well, one famous artist put the icing on the cake of *process* by having other people do the boring work for him. Francis Alÿs somehow enlisted five hundred volunteers to form a long single line at the foot of a giant sand dune outside of Lima, Peru. ARTFORUM magazine told how each of the volunteers in this human chain was instructed by Alÿs to move one shovelful of sand about four inches. His work, titled “When Faith Moves Mountains” was featured on the cover of the magazine (see photo).



Rule # 10.

COLLECT TRASH. Struggling young actors generally work as waiters to support themselves while waiting for their big opportunity. Struggling young artists generally work as garbage men. While the tips aren't as good in this line of work there is a once in a lifetime opportunity to pick up trash that an installation artist can turn into unforgettable works of art. Anything created out of discarded items is worth its weight in gold.

Some famous artists I know buy things they want to use in their installations, and then put them out with the garbage. But, just as the garbage truck pulls up they retrieve them. Then they claim to have made their work of art out of trash and it sells for a premium price.



Can you imagine what an environmental crisis there would be in the cities which house major contemporary art museums if installation art made of trash (found objects) were no longer considered art? The lines of garbage trucks waiting to dispose of this born-again trash would stretch from L.A. to N.Y.

Rule # 11.

TIE UP (OR COVER UP) ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING. There are three different art "schools" teaching this technique. The art departments of community colleges teach that it doesn't matter what you tie up (newspapers, photos, cards). Just make up one or more bundles and place them on the floor of a convenient museum.

The top-tier art schools teach their students to cover up the items they have tied together so that the viewer can't tell what's inside and then to write a wonderful story explaining the hidden meaning of the hidden things.

The best M.F.A. programs instruct their pupils to tie up only mega-things. But this approach is so costly that only one student, a fellow who gets his cloth wholesale because his uncle owns a fabric mill, can afford this approach. He and his wife happened to read this book when they were in Germany and, since they had nothing better to do, they covered up some big building, while the local citizenry was asleep. The last time I heard from them they were in Central Park, off on some **cock-eyed scheme** to try and distract visitors from the muggers and sky-high prices.

I'm working on a commission from The Whitney to tie up Pamela Anderson. For some reason my wife, Judy, doesn't buy it.

Rule # 12

LIGHT UP WITH NEON OR FLUORESCENT BULBS. There is something magical in using neon to write a word or sentence in an art piece. You can turn even the simplest, stupidest word or phrase into a fantabulous work of art by just neonizing it. Curators are fascinated by the glow of a fluorescent bulb.



No artist, before me, has ever had the imagination to create a work of art combining neon, fluorescent and incandescent lighting. You might think that this looks like a lighting store, but look again, it is one of my best-selling installations.

Rule # 13.

TAKE A PICTURE. Just after I put my camera aside in the mid 90's to concentrate on installations, photography took off in the art world. Just my luck.

Buy a camera and some film and take pictures of ordinary sights. Maybe you'll be able to cash in on the mania. Naughty pictures are especially O. K. with curators, male and female. Mail some of these to me in a plain brown envelope and I'll evaluate them for you.

**This photograph was
commissioned by the
Y.M.O.A. (Yogurt
Manufacturers of
America.)**



Rule # 14.

NUDES ARE BIG. Big nudes are bigger. While in the fashion industry the paragon of perfection is the borderline-anorexic model, in the art world larger than life is often the key to success. One South American sculptor became famous by accident. He was too poor to afford a real model so he had to frequent Overeaters Anonymous meetings to get his subjects.



This model was unique in that she charged by the pound instead of by the hour. Here she is seen being moved to the scale.

Rule # 15

IF ALL ELSE FAILS TRY PERFORMANCE ART. As long as you haven't had any formal training in acting you're sure to be a star. It helps if you are willing to make a fool of yourself. Naked is good.

Rule # 16.

THINGS THAT MOVE AND GO BANG, TWIRL, OR FILL WITH AIR ARE IRRESTIBLE. This rule is self explanatory, but I think the pieces that make loud noises are the most attention getting. It's almost as if curators are amazed to see that an artist can construct anything that uses a simple motor.

Rule # 17.

IT'S GOOD TO BE GAY --- not that there's anything wrong with being straight. Many of the leading figures in contemporary art are homosexuals and while in a few other fields, like professional wrestling, this might be a disadvantage, it isn't in art.

I only hope this Rule doesn't lead to a nationwide boycott of my book by the Moral Majority.

Rule # 18.

CONSTRUCT SOMETHING THAT IS 20 to 30 TIMES LIFE-SIZE like a dress that stretches 50 feet or a chair that is 15 feet tall. This adds quite a bit to costs but it's worth it

Rule # 19.

COMBINE RULES. By now you, my reader, should be ready to try some really advanced stuff. Think of the impact of creating a piece, which combines two or more of my Rules in one piece. A ten-foot penis combines rules 37 and 18. Maybe that is what Viagra is all about.

RULE # 19 A

WOODEN BOATS WOULDN'T HURT. If all else fails build a boat out of wood. Any old-looking wooden boat will do because there is something mystical and magical about this form of transportation in the contemporary art world. A boat can be symbolic of so many different things to

so many different people
that it becomes a source of endless musings, enigmas, provocations and fantasies --- and that's what high-class art is all about.

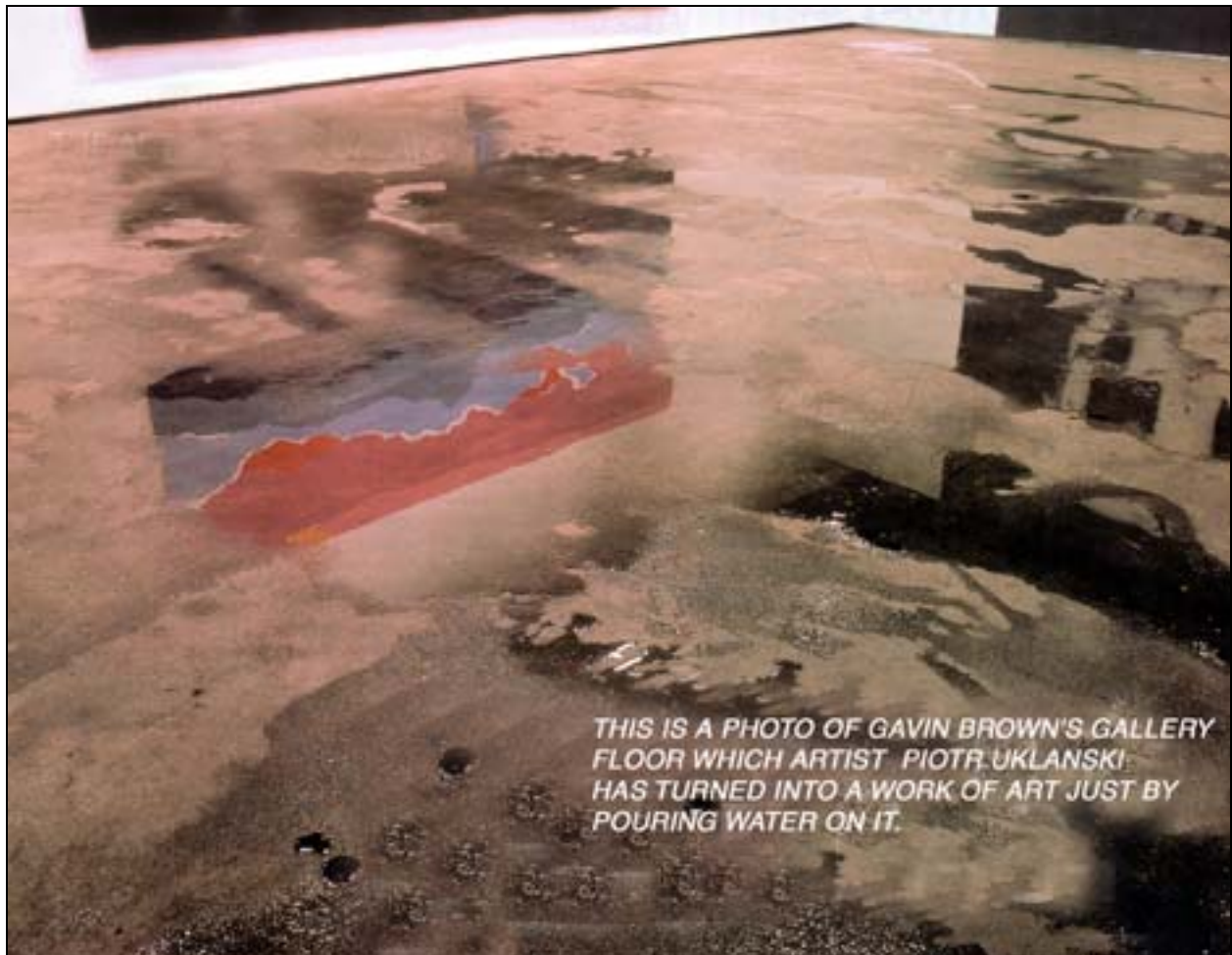
Rule # 20

HOW MANY POLES DO YOU NEED TO SPREAD WATER ON A GALLERY FLOOR?

The answer is one and his name is Piotr Uklanski. All he had to do is pour some water on the floor of Gavin Brown's gallery in the chic Chelsea section of Manhattan and his work received a four-page review (and full page photo) in *ARTFORUM* in November 2002.

The art writer, who probably was also Polish, wrote ecstatically that:

"Wet Floor is a gesture of beautiful, daring economy, this piece exists only to reflect its surroundings. It drives the antiformality of post-Minimalism to an absurd, leaky conclusion by positing a sculpture that exists fully formed yet threatens perpetually to disappear. In this depthless and reflective sculpture, everything takes place on the surface of things."



Rule # 21.

CALVIN KLEIN-IT. Take the disposable camera you bought for Rule # 13 and take pictures of pre-adolescent girls (yes, including your family) in suggestive poses. It will sell. I wonder if the Mann act was named after a photographer (pardon the inside joke, Sally).

This Rule is not to be confused with the more sophisticated Rule covering seedy pictures of addicts or prostitutes.



When I was very young we used to play "doctor". I didn't have a camera then so I recreated (above) the scene from memory. I wonder whatever became of Annette Kaplan?

Rule # 22

HANG OBJECTS FROM CEILING. I don't know what the magic is in attaching almost anything to the ceiling by string, rope or chain, but it transforms the mundane into the wonderful. Have you ever gone to a high-class contemporary art museum and not seen something hanging from the ceiling? Every graduate M.F.A. program has a course 'Hanging Objects 101'. Fail this subject and you can't get your degree. It is an addictive course.



This is one of my very first installations. It vaguely had to do with, "if you build a better mousetrap...". Well, ten years later I still have not found a buyer, but my studio is certainly pest free.

Rule # 23.

MAKE SCULPTURES WITH DEEP MEANING.



Many artists have become famous by making sculptures that are so realistic that it is hard to tell they are not real. I prefer the subtle approach. I roamed a local supermarket and found the perfect model. The subject liked it so much she bought it for list price.

RULE # 23 A (I had too much empty space on the bottom of this Rule so I snuck this one in.)

WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE MUST BE ART. There is great mystery in what you can't see. What could it be? What could it mean?

Take hundreds of photographs of your favorite subject and pin them to a wall. However, turn the photos around so that the pictures face the wall. You would be surprised how many art collectors have

Or, take 20 or so framed canvases, paint the backside black, and hang them ass backwards. Sounds simple, but it's hot. Personally, a lot of things I've seen in museums would look better facing the wall.

Rule # 24.

DON'T BURN OUR FLAG, SHRED OUR CURRENCY. If you are a lefty, pinko liberal and want to become a famous contemporary artist I suggest you tone down your feelings. Discretion is the better part of valor, especially after the last election. You can still express strong feelings, but stay within the bounds of propriety.



I feel very strongly that our government deficits may lead to a severe depression. I created this work of art to convey the image of how government spending is debasing our currency. The original of this sculpture sits in the basement of the Federal Reserve.

Rule # 24.1

GET INTO A CORNER The best way to beat the art game is to invent your own School of Art by making an advance that is so unique it stands the curators on their heads. I did it by inventing **CORNER ART**.

After entering the art world I soon realized that there were too many artists competing for a very limited amount of wall space in museums and galleries. I understood it would take me years and years to pay my dues and receive the recognition to which I was entitled.

Then I had a brainstorm! I realized that there was a tremendous amount of unused museum wall space after all i. e. **THE CORNERS!** Then I set out to create the first picture that was designed to be at right angles so it could go in any corner.



Rule # 25

A DOG IS ONE ARTIST'S BEST FRIEND. Some artists struggle for years before they come up with a winning formula. One such artist, Jeff something or other, built a metal sculpture of a large dog in his backyard. He couldn't find a buyer and left the piece sitting forlorn in the yard.

Neighborhood children used to pass by on their way home from school. They got tired of looking at the dog and started throwing dirt at it. Over time some of the dirt stuck to the sculpture and weeds and flowers started to sprout.

Months passed until, one day, a curator came to visit Jeff's studio to drink in the kitsch. She happened to peer through the kitchen window and noticed the dog, which by now was covered with flowering plants. She loved dogs and flowers and the rest, as they say, is history.



The T-shirt I'm wearing says:

**BRONSTEEN
DE KOONING
PISSARRO**

April 2000

It was sold at the gift shop of the Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, to commemorate my exhibition, which was held in conjunction with DeKooning's and Pissarro's. I was mobbed for autographs att Bilbao.

Rule # 26

“LET THEM WEAR BREAD.” When Marie Antoinette uttered her famous epithet, “Let then eat cake.” it led to her untimely death. When Japanese artist Tatsumi Orimoto proclaimed, “Let them wear bread.” he became a star in the contemporary art world.

Let me explain how this came about. The artist was invited to participate in a festival of Japanese culture in London in May 2001. His artistic contribution was in the form of performance art i.e. he and a group of his collaborators mingled with the crowds on Oxford Street with loaves of bread tied to their faces.

I'll leave it to you to decide whether Marie A. or Tatsumi O. got their just desserts.

Can you pick out Orimoto? I think he is behind the whole wheat.



Rule # 27

YOU'LL NEVER TIRE OF TAKING PICTURES OF YOUR MOTHER.

Orimoto Tatsumi, the famous artist who also brings you Rule # 122, took many photographs of his aged mother, often bedecked in outlandish costumes. The scene below is meant to suggest a correlation between the debris abandoned daily in the streets and the way the younger Japanese have come increasingly to abandon their aging parents.

Orimoto originally tried to photograph this scene inside of one of those take-your-own-photo kiosks, but he had trouble piling all three women into the booth. He settled for a living room in a Tokyo Motel Six.

So grab your camera and take as many pictures as you can of your parents in embarrassing situations--- leave the social commentary to the art critics.



This page brought to you as a public service by the Goodyear Tire and Wubber Company.

Rule # 28

HONE YOUR KRAFT! Take a look at the house in the photo below. It is entirely covered with cheese! What would you say if I told you that it is a work of art created by Cosimo Cavallaro, a noted Canadian film and video director, who became a three-dimensional artist specializing in covering objects with cheese? He reached his zenith when he covered this house --- inside and out--- with 10,000 pounds of melted Velveeta cheese. I wonder if the owner got out in time.

If you want to see other examples of his cheesey art (I couldn't resist.) go to www.cosimocavallaro.com/



There is no accounting for taste in the art community. I would have preferred Camembert.

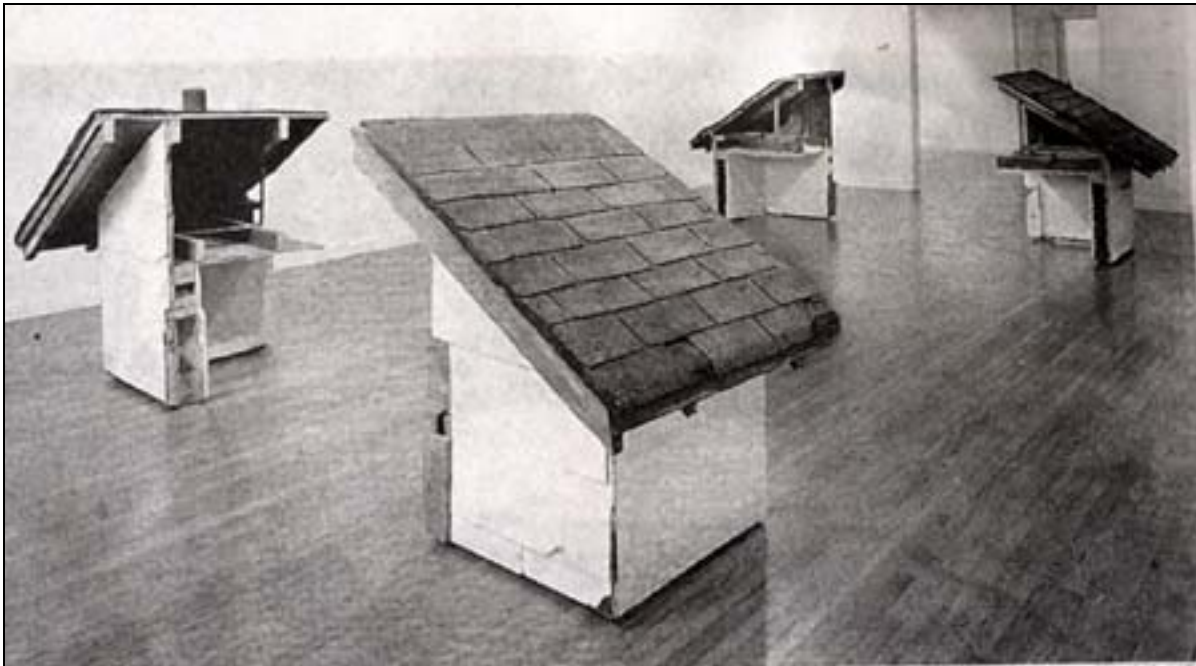
Rule # 29

IT PAYS TO CUT CORNERS. It sure paid off for eminent artist, Gordon Matta-Clark. All he did was cut out the four corners of a vacant two-story house (see photo below) and lo and behold the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art purchased the “four corners”.

The museum’s senior curator commented that:

Besides being the artist’s single most important work, it continues our dedication to art that operates in the gap between art and life.

Several other famous artists have taken to sawing pianos, urinals, violins, etc. with much success. If you could only saw off the four corners of the SF MOMA there would be a lot more fresh air in there.



RULE # 30

LET WILT CHAMBERLAIN BE YOUR ART GURU. Famed British artist Tracey Emin did just that and her work is world-famous. She read with avid interest Wilt's book telling how he "scored" with thousands of girls when he wasn't throwing a basketball through the hoop. Tracey was only "scored upon" by 102 different men from 1963-1994, but she immortalized them by appliquéing their names inside a tent (see below). Art critics applauded.

"Confessional Art" is a sure fire best seller so I suggest you jump on the bandwagon and bare your soul to the art world. It will certainly save money on your psychiatrist's bills.

Tracey was nominated for the prestigious Turner Prize and responded with *My Bed* (see below)--- complete with dirty sheets, bloody knickers and used condoms.

If you are a virgin, you can skip this Rule. If you skip this Rule, I bet you live in a **red** state, and you have no idea what you are missing.



*Everyone I Have Ever Slept With
1963-1994*



My Bed

Rule # 117

HOW DO YOU GET TO THE WHITNEY BIENNIAL?

CRAWL, CRAWL, CRAWL !

Which is just what artist William Pope.L did and sure enough you were able to see his work in the 2002 Biennial. His proposed artistic accomplishment is to crawl 22 miles from the Statue of Liberty to the Bronx dressed in a Superman costume. Part of the piece will be featured in the hallowed halls of the Whitney; the rest of the crawl will be completed over a five-year period. SEE PHOTO BELOW

Pope.L had previously performed his signature “crawls” in Tokyo, Budapest, L.A. and through Wall Street. His other works critique racial stereotypes and consumerism. I believe that if you hired a reputable accounting firm you would find that the publisher of Superman comics made a huge anonymous donation to the Whitney just prior to the biennial. Nike was approached, but they said they don’t make kneepads.

If you want to cash in on this “crawling is art” trend, but don’t want to get your pants dirty, I suggest you hire a huge, white, stretch limousine, and follow the identical route Pope. L takes. If anyone asks, just say you’re rebelling against the establishment.

P.S. The NEA (National Endowment of the Arts) rejected a grant to show Pope.L’s work possibly because of his performance piece in Harlem where he paraded through the streets wearing a 14-foot-long phallic projection. I think it was just a case of white penis envy.



Rule #32

CLASS WILL OUT! Marina Abramovic, who exposed herself for you in another Rule, brought together twenty-three artists in an exhibition she curated at a performance event at the Irish MOMA. You can't quarrel with her selection of Amanda Coogan as a participant who contributed two outstanding works:

1. *Fountain*-a stage piece-"presented her pissing onto the stage into the light of a spotlight, in which her naked pubis was picked out.
2. *Madonna*, which featured Coogan standing immobile for two hours while proffering her naked breast" (see photo.)



Sorry to make you turn your neck, but it saves me a page.

The art writer for *Contemporary* magazine added that the show: "was so rich in quite special experiences that one feels compelled to agree with Abramovic's assertion that there exists a coherent territory of art-making in which artists like herself...have sufficient courage to thrust their work without apology before an occasionally perplexed but potentially delighted audience."

So the next time you step up to a urinal think of yourself as an artist. If you happen to sprinkle a bit on your neighbor, that's just poetic license.

Rule # 32

BECOME A BUTCHER ON YOUR WAY TO AN M.F.A. This way if your art career leads to nowhere you'll have a respectable trade to fall back upon. Performance artist Herman Nitsch created a six-day orgy of animal sacrifice, bloodletting and mock crucifixions of naked women at his country castle outside of Vienna. He declared it his *Gesamtkunstwerk** and the culmination of his career so far. I would think it would be the culmination of anybody's career.

I am told that at the end of the six days the performance artists all got together for a giant cookout. I hope the blindfolded woman shown on the spit got off in time. Perhaps the barbecue was attended by the art writer for *Art In America* who wrote, "Nitsch's theatrical extravaganzas represent self-contained, fully realized esthetic visions, devoid of postmodern doubts."

*I don't know what this word means. Do you?



How would you like to be the model for this artist? I understand she only took the job after *Playboy* turned her down because she wasn't well enough endowed.

Rule # 34

DON'T BE TOO HARD ON YOURSELF; LET OTHERS DO IT FOR YOU. Marina Abramovic, a very well-known Belgrade-born artist, performed at a studio in Naples where she set out a table covered with various items, including a card with the following instructions: "There are 72 items on the table that you can use on me in any way you desire." Among the items were perfume, paint, wine, matches, nails, and a gun.

Photographs documenting the six-hour performance show the artist with writing on her face; blood from a cut on her chest; a chain around her neck; a loaded gun that someone made her hold to her throat; a man kissing her face; and another ripping open her shirt. Throughout she stares as if in a daze. In some photos tears run down her cheeks.

The artist stated in a recent interview for ARTnews that, " At the time there was all this criticism about how body art was sick and so on. This work turned the criticism around."

This Rule combines the best parts of interactive art with the worst parts of masochism---or is it the other way around. What I particularly like about this performance is that it was held in Naples, Italy. I understand she was offered the opportunity to do a repeat performance in an American high school, but turned down the offer considering the venue too dangerous.

Rule # 35

PIN A TAIL ON THE DONKEY AND YOUR WORK WILL BE EXHIBITED IN A MUSEUM.

Brazilian artist Rivane Neuenschwander proved this to be true when she expanded on this children's game to create a work of art in which fish swim in an aquarium with pieces of fragmented love letters pinned to their tails. Well, not exactly pinned, because the artist, undoubtedly an animal rights activist, used a special tissue glue to avoid harming the fish. She then made a video of the aquarium.

This video is a sequel to the artist's six-minute film that shows close-ups of a colony of ants each carrying little pieces of paper bearing the words, "Word" and "World." Ms. Neuenschwander, never at a loss for words, titled the movie *Word/World*. I heard a rumor that the ants escaped after the filming was completed. If you happen to see an ant in your backyard carrying a piece of paper on its back you have Ms. N to thank.

The art writer for *Flash Art* magazine commented that the artist's work, "aims at disclosing a poetic existence within the most ordinary goods and objects, in opposition to an overly civilized and seemingly ordered world." Nowhere is this better illustrated than in her most remarkable recent work that was shown in her hometown museum. Neuenschwander's large installation is a simulated waterfall she constructed from 25 ordinary aluminum buckets hanging in disarray on cables from the ceiling (see facing page.) Each suspended bucket had a small hole in its bottom that allowed water to drip into other buckets placed on the floor of the exhibition space. Every four hours a museum employee refilled the buckets with water using a ladder that was also permanently on display.

↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

In 2001 and 2002 the artist had four solo exhibitions in the Americas as well as shows in Europe. And to think it all started when the artist played "Pin the tail on the donkey" at her sixth birthday party. Her parents were too poor to be able to buy a poster of a donkey to use as a target so they used a friend's mule instead.



NO THE ROOF OF THIS MUSEUM ISN'T LEAKING.
THIS IS A WORK OF ART.

Rule # 37.

USE DIRTY WORDS. Famous artists can get away with using all sorts of four letter words like:

f _ _ _

s _ _ _

m _ _ _ _ _ f _ _ _ _ _

c _ _ _

a _ _ h _ _ _ (some artists spell this as one word. It's all a matter of personal taste.)



I created this piece on a commission from the Ely Lily Company.

Do you think they ever paid for it?

S _ _ _ no!

Rule # 38

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND. Little did the elephants that live in London's Zoo think that their dried dung, mixed with paint by famed British painter Chris Ofili, would wind up on canvases in noted museums and galleries. But, as you well know, that is exactly what happened. Ofili won the prestigious Turner Prize in 1998 and his work was a sensation in the exhibition of that name at the Brooklyn Museum. He is referred to in hushed tones as "the organic painter". A jealous painter tried to one-up Ofili by using 'Miracle-Gro' mixed in with his paint, but his paintings didn't smell enough.

There is an old adage that says that, "Chris Ofili never forgets." And true to the old adage, Ofili raised \$105,000 for the elephants of the London Zoo and to repay the zoo for the help of the elephant keepers; who for several years dried the dung so that he could come and take it away in pellets.

For many years art critics have said my work looks like s _ _ . And I did it without having to resort to using elephant dung.



Ofili was born in Nigeria and his fame was a boon to that small country's tourist trade. The Minister of Tourism created this huge dung heap, and all the bus tours stop here for a "Kodak Photo Op, as I did.."

RULE # 38

LET THEM TELL YOU WHAT YOUR ART MEANS. If you've followed all of my previous Rules and you're still a failure I suggest that you have been trying too hard. The best way to cure this is to relax and create works of art that don't have any meaning and let the art critics tell you what they mean.

For example, I just read a review of a show of a fine artist at a prestigious gallery. The art critic for the major newspaper in the world began his review by recalling the artist's debut in 1994, "when he stuck yogurt container lids on all the walls, the clear ordinary plastic kind of lids with blue rims and the expiration dates stamped on them. They were the only things in the room. Needless to say, it didn't seem like much (emphasis supplied by E.B.) but the nature of good new art is that often you don't recognize it; then gradually, by virtue of its quality, it reorders your taste---. Thinking back to his first show, I'd now say that the yogurt caps were calculated to cause a similar effect by making people uncomfortably aware of the gallery's emptiness [Editor's note: the gallery's emptiness was most likely caused because people were aware of what was being shown.] The installation was about the psychological gap between what we expected or hoped to see and what we did see. Its subject wasn't the esthetics of yogurt packaging but our reaction with an empty room."

I'm sorry to have put you through such a long paragraph, but there is a lesson here for you to learn. Create art that doesn't have any meaning and let the critic tell you (and the world) what it means. That way the critic has a vested interest in your success and it certainly causes less wear and tear on the artist.

Rule # 40.

THREE IS A LUCKY NUMBER IN ART. For some reason if an object in a scene is shown three times it almost insures its success as a work of art.



This is my best example of the Rule of Three's. One museum curator argued that this was an illustration of the Rule of Six's but that's splitting hers.

Rule # 41

TURN FORNICATION INTO RELIGIOUS ART. Famous artist Sam Taylor-Wood did just that with the help of the prestigious Mathew Marks Gallery in N.Y.C. A female reviewer for *Contemporary* magazine got pretty carried away after first watching the artists film of the pietà and then his 25 overtly erotic transparencies of a couple having sex.

The reviewer wrote:

“The pieta has always suggested a sexual rapport between mother and child...I really find the so-called religious works more sensual and arousing than the overtly sexual ones in the transparencies in which there are images of foreplay and fucking in a variety of positions...I think this is because these photographic miniatures leave little room for this female viewer’s erotic imagination, unlike the gorgeous guys playing Christ in the religious images, where I can fantasize to my heart’s content, unimpeded by the presence of a female rival.”

Editor’s note: It may be just a rumor, but I understand the art reviewer is actually a defrocked Mother Superior, who writes under a pseudonun.

So, dear reader, get out the best of all the explicit photos you’ve taken in your bedroom, add references to Moses, Allah, Buddha etc., and ship them off to your nearest contemporary art gallery. Send me a copy, just for my files.



This is a picture of that old-time religion.

Rule # 42

SEW AND YE SHALL REAP (AND YE SHALL EXHIBIT). Get out your needle and thread and sew up a storm and you'll have the biggest museums fighting to show your creations. In the past few years, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Guggenheim, the Philadelphia Museum of Art plus a slew of other lesser-known museums have exhibited clothing of Armani, Jackie Kennedy, Schiaparelli, and Madonna. It may or may not be art, but it's certainly been a big box office draw.

So, I bought a Singer sewing machine, took a one-hour lesson and look at the six dresses I created (see photo below and on facing page.)

So, dear reader, sew up a storm, even if your sewing is only so-so, and I guarantee all the art galleries in SOHO will beat a path to your door. (Well, at least one did.)



Rule # 43

GO AFTER SPORT FANS. More people go to basketball games than to contemporary museums. One famous artist realized this and did a piece that consisted of a basketball floating in a half-filled fish tank-that's all it was. It was called, I think, "Basketballs Can't Sink". Many collectors rushed out and bought it, but they never realized that the water had to be changed every two weeks and that the basketball kept losing its air.



I created this maintenance-free knock-off of Jeff's trail- blazing piece named Black Girls Can't Cheer.". Which one would you want to buy?.

Rule # 45

VOMIT YOUR WAY TO STARDOM! The contemporary art field is getting more competitive each day. It has become a sort of, “Can you top this contest?” Patty Chang, a Chinese American artist, was more than up to the challenge. She christened the ladies room of the beautiful new Contemporary Arts Center building in Cincinnati by creating a performance piece in which she:

Enters the ladies room while the audience watches from a television monitor outside. Using the toilet as a seat and pulling over a card table, she sets it, and from shopping bags stowed beneath, extracts Chinese noodles, stir-fried pork and vegetables, soup, soda, chips and pizza. An hour-long feeding frenzy ensues. Then she vomits --- and then continues her eating binge/purge.

Chang graduated from the prestigious CAU (Chinese Art University), majoring in Bulimia.

ARTnews devoted a full page to the artist’s work and the art *in November 2003*. “Self-inflicted discomfort is a Chang trademark and she skirts socially taboo issues with carefully crafted illusions.” A wonderful example of this is when she slurped water off the floor of a public men’s room (the water was poured onto a mirror, which shows the artist knows where to draw the line).

Her work has been or will be exhibited at the UCLA Hammer Museum and the Guggenheim. She is represented by New York’s Jack Tilton/Anna Kustera Gallery and videos of her bulimic episodes sell, in a limited edition of five, for only \$10,000. I understand this work is must viewing for graduate students at the prestigious Payne Whitney Clinic in New York.

Rule # 46

URINALS ARE THE ROSETTA STONE OF CONTEMPORARY ART If you have the sense and sensitivity to understand why a urinal is a work of art you can appreciate contemporary art. Yes, today's cutting edge art had its roots in the Men's Restroom of yesteryear.

Believe it or not, The Museum of Modern Art In New York City has more urinals in its permanent art collection than The Getty Museum in California has in all its mens restrooms.



Many years ago an artist made history by putting a urinal on the wall and calling it “art”. Can you imagine how well my bejeweled urinal has been received? Tiffany is going to show it in its Fifth Avenue window for Christmas.

Rule # 47.

GOD IS A GOOD SUBJECT BUT TRICKY. If you are a famous artist you can get away with blasphemy. It sells well in the blue states, especially if you can get your work banned someplace.

I suggest extreme caution for an unknown artist; but then again the chances are you'll always be unknown, So go for it!



**I
HAVE
TRIED
TO GET
THIS
PIECE
BAN-
NED,
BUT
WITH
RUDY
GONE
IT IS
MUCH
HARD-
ER.**

RULE # 48.

TAKE A BREAK EVERY NOW AND THEN. It is important that you don't burn yourself out or you'll develop "artists' block". I have found that playing a round of golf with friends is a wonderful way to relax. You'll come back to your studio with a new lease on life.

The picture below was taken at our golf club during a recent Mixed Member Guest Tournament.



The fellow seen walking away from the golf cart is on the telephone to the Rules Committee. Naturally, I am head of the Rules Committee, and I ruled that he could remove his ball from a hazard without penalty.

Rule # 49

YOU CAN STRING ANY MUSEUM ALONG. Famous British artist Cornelia Parker did just that and her work of art wound up in the Tate Museum. All she did was spend one week wrapping Rodin's *The Kiss* in a mile of string. Unfortunately, a vandal entered the museum and cut the string (see photo below.)

Parker reported that her work intended to “address the claustrophobic nature of relationships.” So, all any aspiring artist who has paid good money to buy this book has to do is buy a mile of string, kidnap Cornelia Parker, tie her up with the string, and either have your way with her or exhibit her at The Tate, whichever you prefer. *



* Editor's note. "Why not do both?"

Author's reply. "It depends upon what Parker looks like."

Editor's reply. "Chauvinist pig."

Rule # 50.

VAGINAS, PENISES AND BREASTS ARE SUREFIRE WINNERS. I don't know why this is, but it is. I've seen a 5' x 8' Cibachrome photograph of a vagina at the Whitney and there was a recent exhibition at The Guggenheim of 25 young women, 20 of whom wore bikinis while five were stark naked (or was it vice versa?). It was a real crowd pleaser.

To cash in on this sexual preoccupation of museum curators I plan to create a piece that will consist of a metal thimble with the head of a penis attached to the top. It will be viewed through a large magnifying glass and is tentatively titled "Phallic Thimble." I wouldn't be surprised if it gets into the next Biennale.

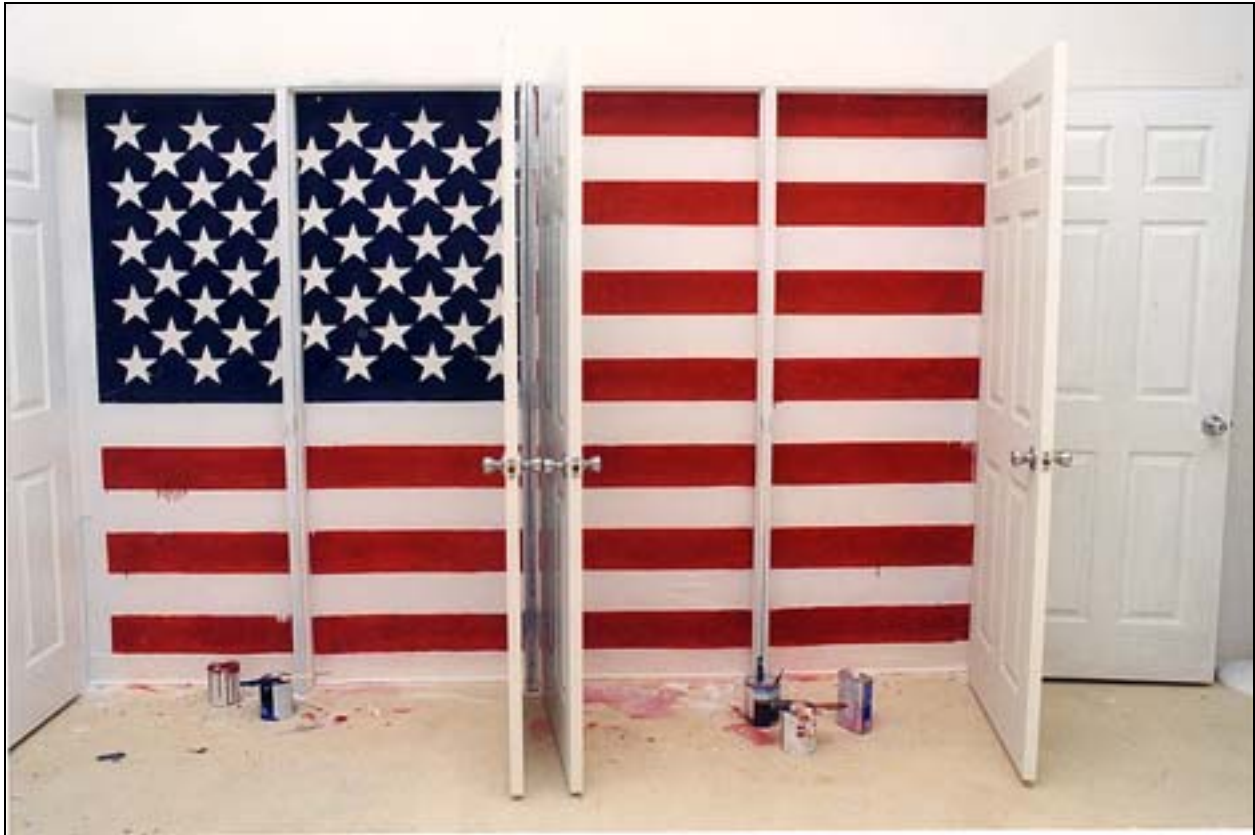


This is part of a work I created for the Union Pacific Railroad for their Super Bowl commercial. I haven't received payment as yet. I have always been a railroad buff.

Rule # 51.

NOT ANOTHER FLAG. I just read that Jasper's pieces were going through the roof. I believe he has done over 40 flags, so there must still be a new way to paint a flag. The moral of this Rule is that if it sells, make more.

This installation signifies the United States Open Door policy. I sold it to a fine museum in Tijuana.



RULE # 52B

KEEP YOUR EYES CLOSED. I read a review in The New York Times in mid 1999 describing the drawings of an artist whose work was on exhibition in a SOHO gallery. The reviewer wrote that he thought the artist's work had not received the recognition it deserved.

What caught my eye was that this artist drew with his eyes closed and with a pencil in each hand. One such piece was created in a moving subway car. What must the subway straphangers have thought as they watched this artist busily drawing away?

The next thing I expect to read is a review by a critic who kept his or her eyes closed when visiting an exhibition.

Rule # 52B is subtitled "keep plugging away". Maybe you'll be lucky enough to have your work reviewed by a blindfolded critic.

RULE # 52C

80,000 EYES LOOKING AT YOU. An excellent example of the More is Better School of Contemporary Art is the famous European artist's exhibition of 40,000 six-inch-high terra-cotta figures. Students at a local art school created these freaky looking figures for the artist who just stood back and reaped the rewards and acclaim.

The Rule to be learned here is that more is better, especially when someone else does the work.

No photos accompany these Rules to save money.

Rule # 52D

PLAY HARD TO GET. If no one seems interested in seeing your work do what one clever performance artist did. For a 13-year period, which stretched from December 31, 1986 until December 31, 1999 he continued to make art, but did not show it to anyone.

I don't see the difference between what this artist did and most of the artists I know do (though not by choice.)

So to follow this rule to its natural conclusion just hire a public relations firm to publicize the fact that you won't ever show your work to anyone and art critics will beat a path to your door.

Rule # 52E

I read in ARTnews about a famous French artist whose first claim to fame was the complete refinishing of the entire inside of his house with white tile. It took him 23 years to complete this work of art, and no one was allowed inside the house during this period. For some unexplained reason his wife divorced him. After he completed the refinishing, he opened his home to visitors and then demolished the entire house. He filled 100 cylinders with the shards and gave them to various museums, which proudly display them.

RULE 52F

CREATE A TINY BLURRED PHOTOGRAPH. Ann Hamilton, possibly America's premier female contemporary artist turned to photography and found a joyous critic of her efforts as witnessed by the following review:

A less heroic work illustrating Hamilton's concepts was a tiny blurred photograph (emphasis supplied by me) made by placing a miniature pinhole camera inside her lips and exposing the film using apertures created by various sounds she made. The camera sat in her mouth, (emphasis again supplied) the border between interior and exterior, between feeling and articulation. The image portrayed was a staring omnipotent eye, a stunning omnipotent move that needed no poetic trappings to succeed.

The only way to top this tour de force, I suggest, is to find a different orifice in which to place the camera. Since I have a family audience I cannot specifically tell you where to put your camera, but I'll give you a hint. If you have to bend down and look through your legs to see the subject of your picture you are on the right track.

Rule # 52G

TAKE A HIKE AND BECOME FAMOUS. One very fine Belgian artist found that by walking he not only helped his heart, he became famous.

For almost a decade, he has been "performing" walks in different cities. He wandered through Stockholm wearing an unraveling blue sweater. Outside of Copenhagen, he roamed for a week under the influence of a different drug each day. In San Paulo he walked through a part of the city with a can slowly leaking paint."

He is obviously my kind of guy, and I plan to see him when I learn when visiting hours are.

Rule # 52H.

KEEP YOUR FLY ZIPPED. I'm almost embarrassed to tell you what lengths you'll have to go to to top one very fine female artist, who created *Collection* described by an art critic as:

a wall of fantastic phalluses, all protruding rather lazily through zippered openings attached to the wall. They are made of fabrics with different textures and colors, the predominant hue, quite naturally, lascivious red; they vary in size and circumference from the delightfully dainty to the gruesome. A diagram accompanying the piece suggests the viewer take out or put back the phalluses from their zippered pockets, encouraging a tactile involvement that might make you blush. --- The act of touching the pieces also provokes particular feelings---excitement, embarrassment, desire, curiosity, ---which reflect experiences one may have had in sexual contact.

After reading the art critic's review I am at a loss for words---so I created *Family of Man* (see below), to try and capitalize on the sexual revolution.



No museum wanted to exhibit it so I made in into a piece which doubles as a coat hanger. You can purchase it for your den or bedroom at:

www.penis.com for \$29.95 plus S&H.

Note www.penis.com is an unzipped but totally secure sight.

p.s. Some groups have complained about the size of their respective penis. I can now make this piece with any one penis much larger than the others, for a slight surcharge.

RULE # 52 I

HUG A TREE, STARK NAKED, AND YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY TO BECOMING A FAMOUS PERFORMANCE ARTIST. Maria Abramovic, the famous artist depicted in another Rule, teaches performance art to students in the Braunschweig College of Fine Arts in Germany. As part of her course a group of 20-some students retreats to the countryside for five days to live under primitive conditions and perform rigorous assignments. They include five-hour walks taken in the nude and hugging a tree in the nude (see amazing photo below.) These exercises are designed “to heighten perception, increase endurance, concentration and self control.” I don’t know how successful the exercise in self control was because one of the students (the blond) became engaged to an oak tree old enough to be her grandfather.



**If you are seeing double perhaps you should rest awhile.
If you are seeing double perhaps you should rest awhile.**

RULE #55

SHOW WHAT YOU ARE MADE OF. A very fine female Austrian artist changed her name and used only uppercase to announce her presence on the male-dominated Viennese art scene. She made an even bigger statement with her crotchless performance piece --- photographs of which were exhibited at the Moore College of Art and Design in Philly. I quote from a review of her work:

Her most controversial action was one of her first, Action Pants: Genital Panic (1969), during which she marched into an art-film (porno?) house in Munich wearing pants with the crotch cut out. Walking up and down the aisle among the mostly male patrons she challenged them to "look at the real thing" instead of passively enjoying naked women on the screen. She extended the action to posters picturing her seated, wearing the same pants, but also sporting a machine gun. At Moore College 60 copies of this poster were neatly aligned in rows on a wall looking very much like an Andy Warhol installation ---.

I am somewhat afraid of telling you what you have to do to really follow this rule. Perhaps some of you have videotapes of yourself and a partner that you could submit to Moore College for their next exhibition. Let me know what happens and I wouldn't mind seeing a copy.

RULE # 56

DON'T GET EGG ON YOUR FACE. Listen to how this art critic raved about a Polish artist's work of art.

In an acclaimed work which consists of nothing more than a raw, polished chicken egg set atop a pedestal Sander (the artist) used sandpaper (probably no pun intended by reviewer) to polish the egg by hand, turning its fragile surface into a shimmering, highly reflective field. Suddenly a normal egg becomes wildly sensual and luminous. It has an ethereal gorgeousness that feels frankly sublime, and it also resonates with suggestions of primal origins and primal fertility.

If art critics want ethereal gorgeousness give it to them. That's why I created the work or art (below), "Bacon and Eggs". I am only half Polish, so it may not strike you as wildly sensual as the raw polished egg above.



Rule # 56A

SUCK ON THIS! I'm including this Rule because I thought you would enjoy seeing a photo of artist Camilla Dahl's installation **Champagne Bar** almost as much as reading the art writer's review of it in *Frieze*.

Here's the photo:



Here's the review: "Elevated on a pedestal is a slick platform reminiscent of the sixties Hollywood swimming pool: in the center, a drain terminating in three teats. A pretty girl in a white dress, lounging seductively on the bar/pool top, pours champagne down the slope to viewers who squat awkwardly to suck on the teats. The champagne, which we would normally associate with pleasure, looks like foaming piss in this pool-turned-urinal. Then there are the teats: infantile gratification tied to sophisticated adult activity, with overtones of sex, suckling, humiliation, delight, revulsion and a host of other conflicting associations."

I COULDN'T HAVE DESCRIBED THE SCENE ANY BETTER, NOR WOULD I HAVE WANTED TO.

Rule # 57

SEW PUBIC HAIR ON YOUR PILOW AND YOUR ART WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE 2003 VENICE BIENNIALE. Artist Jana Sterback did just that and she represented Canada at the prestigious international exhibition. Some people just brush pubic hairs off their pillow, but Sterback collected them and:

“meticulously wove them into a white pillow in an anatomical outline of the female genital area. Viewers oscillate between revulsion and voyeuristic pleasure, between the desire to touch and a command to keep one’s distance...the artist succeeds in using the ambiguous cushion to evoke the fetishistically colored traces of physical intimacy, using bold hybridization to create a subtle incunabulum of the obscure.”

The above quote is from an article in *Flash Art* that was translated from the German. I wonder if the translator was just having an off night.



I understand Martha Stewart plans to copy this for KMart

Rule # 57A (Pubic hair cont.)

PERFORMANCE ART AIN'T WHAT ITS ALL CRACKED UP TO BE. *Art Papers* magazine devoted a full page to a description of a performance by a group known as “a.k.a.” The art writer commented:

“Eight women filled the fifty minutes with an avalanche of imagery that riddled the psyche, leaving indelible marks and creating memorable, haunting tableaux...The first moving visual collage included the video of a train in motion in the background as the pink-haired bride raised her dress to reveal her unprotected femininity. Her pubic hairs became public and waved in the breeze created by a semicircle of plastic fans...The bride stared blankly at the audience as she performed a series of slow-motion symbolic motions while at stage left another performer methodically hacked to pieces another bridal gown with a machete...At one point the bride birthed an egg from her loins and the imagery of dead chickens in a slaughterhouse filled the screen...The performance peaked with all the women screaming simultaneously in a nightmarish vignette seemingly expressing unfettered rage against the restraints imposed by boyfriends, husbands, fathers and patriarchal society.”

Editor's note: I am frankly too embarrassed to show you a picture of these performers in action. I do have it on DVD for art lovers.

RULE # 58

AFTER YOU HAVE MADE A NAME FOR YOURSELF WITH SOME OUTLANDISH PIECES YOU CAN CALM DOWN AND CREATE WORKS OF ART SUITABLE FOR A FAMILY AUDIENCE. The same artist who exposed her crotch in Rule 55 seven years later did a performance piece in which she walked down a city street with a loaf of bread hanging from around her neck and invited passers-by to cut their own portion. She had this videotaped for showing later on after her allotment of bread ran out.

I wonder if there is some subtle relationship between the "crotch" and "bread" works of art.



Rule 59

IT AIN'T WHAT YOU DO; IT'S THE WAY THAT YOU DO IT. Artist Amy Adler followed that sage advice and her work wound up in a gallery in The Big Apple. Realizing that just taking a picture of herself wouldn't bring fame or fortune she went through a very convoluted process.

First, she found a model who resembled herself.

Second, she posed the model in the artist's home.

Third, she photographed her in various rooms.

Fourth, she made pastel drawings of the photos.

Fifth, she then photographed the drawings.

There you have it. Now why didn't you think of that?

The art writer for *Frieze* described his reaction to Adler's work: "It makes me want to look deeper, to unravel her mysteries, undress her, and peek in her closets."

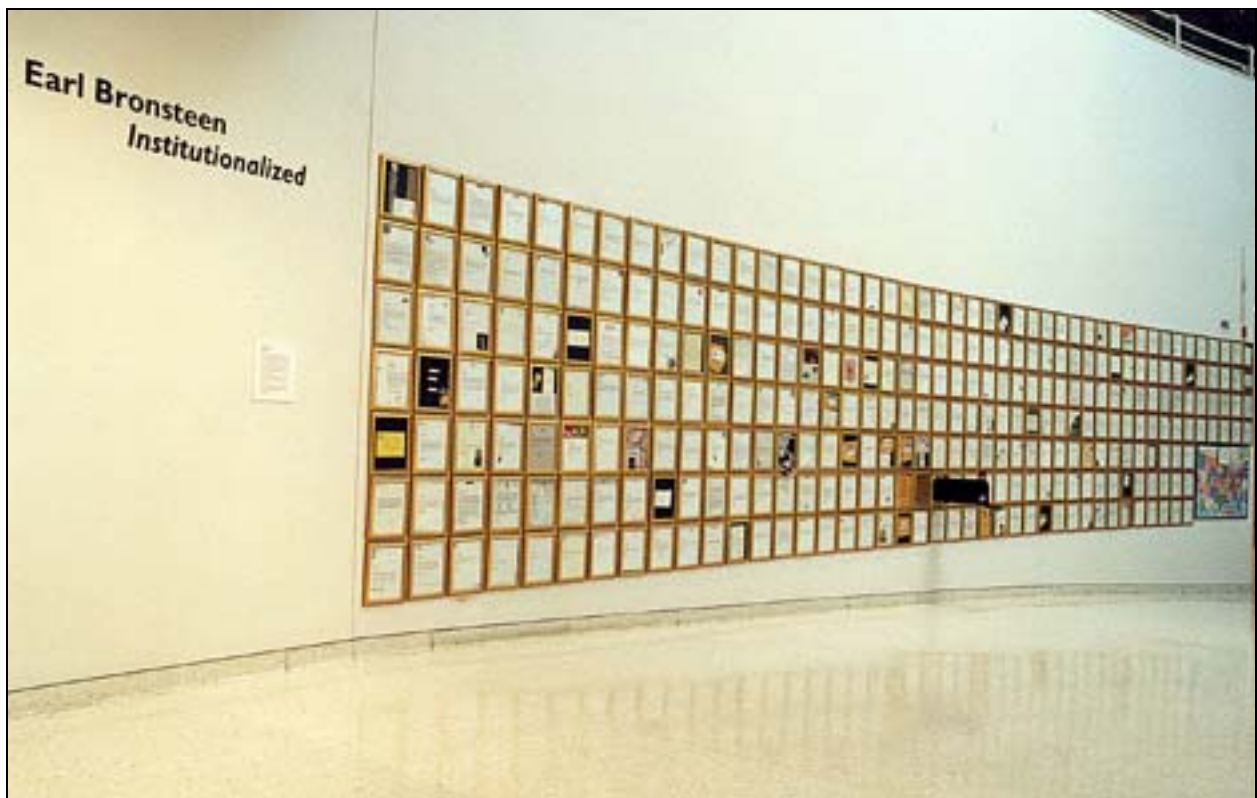
I personally wouldn't mind looking in his closets some rainy afternoon.



Rule # 60

TURN S _ _ _ INTO SHINOLA. I have to admit that I have gotten quite a few rejection letters from museums and galleries (529 so far, and counting) on the road to artistic success. One day, many years ago, I got a brainstorm and framed each one and made them into an installation (see below). Now, each day I can hardly wait to open my mail to see if I can add to my **Rejection Wall**.

I also made it into The Guinness Book of Records as the Most Rejected Artist in the world. So the moral to this story is quite simple - - - you don't have to be talented to succeed.



Rule # 61

IN MY EXCITEMENT TO WRITE RULE # 62 I FORGOT WHAT RULE # 61 WAS ALL ABOUT. MAYBE IT WILL COME TO ME LATER ON.

Rule # 62

HIRE A P.R. FIRM. If you think you can get to the top without a good Public Relations firm you've got another think coming. I struggled for years without one and got nowhere. I even tried bribing a few curators, but that didn't work out as they just kept my money and never showed my work.

When my P.R. firm got my picture on the cover of Time magazine my career skyrocketed. To understand the reference to "Neptune?" you'll have to get the April 7th issue.

SEE NEXT PAGE

Rule # 63

PAY THE PIPER. Don't be afraid to bribe a museum curator in order to have your work exhibited. The art world is very competitive and museum directors and curators are very underpaid. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that much of the contemporary art you see hanging in a museum wouldn't be there if someone hadn't been paid off.

So if you are tired of seeing work hanging in the fancy museums, which isn't half as good as, yours then pay the piper. Collectors do it, clothing designers do it, artists do it, and the best galleries do it.

Yes, I know that in a previous Rule I told you that when I bribed a curator he kept the money and never showed my work. I never said it was a perfect world.

Rule # 64

DON'T LET THE MaFiA GET TO THE GARBAGE FIRST. I'm not talking about the Mafiosa you see in the movies, I'm talking about those installation artists who have bought into garbage companies so they can get the pick of the trash to use in their work.

Back in Rule # 10 (that I drew up in 1998) I wrote about the need to search out garbage dumps and dumpsters for the raw material for your next installation. Well the thousand of art students graduating each year with their M.A.'s or M.F.A.'s must have read my book because upon graduating the first thing these aspiring artists do is head straight for local trash bins or garbage dumps. It's quite a site, especially in California where students, still wearing their caps and gowns, hunt through the junk. It's become a rite of passage for the students. Large crowds come out to watch the students descend in swarms on the trash reminiscent of the crowds who line the beaches to watch the arrival of the spawning grunions beneath a nearly full moon California moon.

Rule # 65

GET A TIGER IN YOUR TANK. Once upon a time a young, brash, struggling British artist was watching the “tele” when he saw a commercial for Exxon exhorting viewers to "get a tiger in your tank." Being a very visual person he conjured up in his mind the image of a huge tiger immersed in a very large fish tank full of gasoline. He thought he could build such an installation and sell it to Exxon

Well, to make a long story short, he had a large tank built, filled it with Exxon gasoline and put a tiger in the tank. Unfortunately as he was having the tank transported to Exxon's headquarters the tiger drowned.

So he went back to the drawing board and came up with a proposed new advertising slogan:

Get a Tiger Shark in Your Tank

Then he took the dead tiger out of the tank, replaced it with a tiger shark and was transporting it on an open flat-bed trailer through the streets of London to Exxon's headquarters when a passerby (who just happened to be one of England's richest ad execs - - - and an art collector) spied the tank cum tiger shark. He decided to buy it on the spot. He personally fed the shark each day and they became good friends. Unfortunately, the tiger shark died.

But, the day was saved with some formaldehyde and the fish tank was moved from his aquarium to his art gallery and no one was any wiser.

In later years the ad exec wanted to sell this piece and felt he needed some publicity to inflate the value. So he offered a museum guy from Brooklyn a deal, you exhibit my dead tiger shark and I'll buy your bridge.

Rule # 66

EXPOSE YOURSELF IN THE NAME OF ART. Marina Abramovic is a very famous artist. The one thing she doesn't need is more exposure, but she decided to expose herself (stark naked) for twelve 24 hour-days in a New York City gallery. She lived, bathed, slept, fasted, peed (plus even worse), in full view of any visitor to the gallery. She lived in three raised cubicles, which were guarded by ladders with sharpened knife blades for rungs.

I never saw a performance piece attract as much press coverage since the gang of nude gals who stood in the atrium of the Guggenheim a while ago. Attendance reached 500 one day.

This performance is probably just an outgrowth of the fantastically successful "Reality TV" programs that have captured America's heart and mind. I fully expect the Whitney to jump the gun and show Christo and friend living together in the buff in one of their rooms.

The art writer for *Contemporary* wrote, "It is a continuous unspoken dialogue between artist and audience, each sustaining the other's humanity. Exactly what is being said, though, neither party can know for sure." (E.B.'s note: I saw the look on some of the faces of art lovers in the audience and I could read their minds, for sure.)

I you are offended by total nudity 24/7 I suggest you do not look on the next page. If you want to see a famous, slightly overweight, artist in the buff please turn the page.



ABRAMOVIC BARES HER WHOLE
IN THE NAME OF ART
AND WHY NOT?



Rule # 68

MAKE A MOVIE WITH NOTHING HAPPENING ON THE SCREEN, AND LET IT RUN FOR ALMOST SIX HOURS - - - AND IF YOU ARE FAMOUS ENOUGH YOU'LL HAVE A HIT ON YOUR HANDS. Bruce Nauman used seven cheap video cameras, equipped with infrared tape, placed around his studio and just let the cameras roll on and on for days and nights on end. Michael Kimmelman, art writer extraordinaire for *New York Times*, wrote that Nauman edited out everything showing any people or any movement except for that of a stray mouse or animal. He left in the drone of the air conditioner, the wind and a distant train whistle.

The world famous Dia Center for the Arts in N.Y.C. used seven DVD projectors to put these images on display in its vast gallery for a year. Visitors, who pay the admission fee, get to sit on rolling office chairs and stare at almost nothing for hours and hours. I did. I tried to get my money back , but without success.

Kimmelman wrote that this movie might well turn out to be one of Nauman's important works. He wrote, "I find it a weirdly beautiful meditation on nothingness and artist's block . . . the work overwhelms you with anxiety, and expectation, that an artist must feel in a studio, alone, desperately waiting for an idea."

An art writer for *Art in America* wrote that she found the movie strangely, self-consciously affecting.

Siskel and Ebert gave the movie a "thumbs up---yours."

Rule # 69B

THE MORE IS BETTER CHAMPIONSHIP AWARD goes to a very fine Brazilian artist whose show at the very fine New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York included 6,000 wooden measuring sticks suspended from the ceiling. (This artist was smart enough to combine two Rules.) But, this tour de force was only the appetizer for a work by this artist that was made up of 500,000 plastic numbers scattered over the floor. A very fine art critic commented:

When viewers are confronted within the installation, surrounded by numbers, the means by which time and space are conventionally measured, appear to abstract constructs.

Possibly, of even greater significance is that this artist's name appears in the Guinness Book of Records for "quantity in art".

The reviewer's name is enshrined in another category.

Rule # 69C

IT TAKES 15,000 PICTURES TO MAKE A ZERO. This mysterious title is meant to pique your interest in an installation shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. Perhaps this exhibition was meant to capitalize on the blockbuster movie "Pearl Harbor" because it is a life-sized replica of the famous, or is it infamous, World War II Japanese Zero fighter plane. The Japanese artist Nakahashi just happened to have a lot of Fuji film in his closet. So, instead of just taking a single picture of a Zero and enlarging it, he took 15,000 different photos of every inch of the plane. Then he taped the photos together and plumped them out with bubble wrap to recreate a full-size airplane.

It probably would have been a lot cheaper for Nakahashi to find a used Zero to exhibit, but would you buy a used Zero from this guy?

Rule # 68D

POUR SALT INTO A RUG. Any artist can create a piece that the viewer can look at, enjoy and readily understand. But, such work rarely winds up in a museum. To be successful you must create pieces that either defy interpretation or just hint at possible meanings. Don't just take my word for it, read a review in the May 2002 *Contemporary* art magazine which describes Miroslav Balka's installation at the White Cube Gallery in London. Balka cut out two rectangular holes from a half-unrolled drab and dirty carpet and filled the space with white salt so as to create a continuous surface.

The art writer opined a possible interpretation of this piece might have "something to do with death, certainly the rectangles of salt seem like twin graves; but salt is also the stuff of life - here its associations with vitality and salaciousness make the sense of tearful sorrow all the more poignant; and, perhaps, in the shape of the salt, a Biblical reference to Lot's wife."

I never thought of salt as being salacious, but maybe the writer was dreaming about either a large saltshaker or rubbing salt on a womb. That's what makes "art that has no meaning" so much more interesting than art that has meaning.

The art writer for *Frieze* saw it differently. He wrote, "the polished concrete floor is nowhere visible through the salt, and the sculpture makes you imagine that the rectangles of salt can be rolled into the unseen part of the carpet although you know this to be impossible." The writer then asked, "How does a plane relate to volume?"



Rule # 69E

STICK A PIPE IN A RELIGIOUS FIGURE AND YOU'LL WIND UP IN THE VENICE BIENNALE. Artists have been painting and sculpting religious figures for thousands of years, but it took a savvy New Yorker to hit pay dirt by sticking a long, hollow tube (drainpipe) through a statue of Mary, the Virgin Mother.

Rumor has it that the artist stuck a pipe through the statue hoping that New York's mayor would condemn the piece as sacrilegious and make him an instant sensation. But, that's probably just a sour grape rumor started by jealous artists who have large quantities of unsold religious statues and who never were smart enough to stick a drainpipe through them.

I decided to try and copy Bob Gober's installation, but adapt it for my Jewish friends. Turn to the next page to see the results.

Earl's



Bob's



Rule # 70

YOU ONLY NEED OODLES OF NOODLES FOR SUCCESS. Tom Friedman is plenty famous and therefore I am dedicating a second Rule to him. Besides staring at a piece of white paper for 1,000 hours, and writing every word in the dictionary on a 3x3 foot piece of paper he cooked the contents of a one-pound box of pasta and attached the pieces end to end, forming one continuous strand of spaghetti. All of these works of art have been acclaimed in museums around the world. The artist explained that this last piece was a pun on the noodle being the brain and its directing one through a perpetual convoluted line of thought. This sounds to me like what happens to one's mind when under the influence of marijuana. I never inhaled, but he might have. If steroids don't help you art career maybe a little "pot" will.



Rule # 71

WRITE WORDS. I don't know any other field where you can become famous by writing a few quite ordinary words or sentences on a wall. Art critics almost wet their pants when they enter a museum or gallery and find words written on the wall. Single words, a few words and even sentences are all you need. Somehow, commonplace words become profound when written on a wall or side of a bus. If you were to utter these words in an ordinary conversation people would think you were a nitwit

And put these words in neon and wow, you're a great philosopher.

Rule # 71 A

PRISON ART. Would you believe a prestigious museum would pay an artist to hire someone to spend 15 days in solitary confinement within the museum? Well P.S. 1 CAC in Long Island City did just that.

Santiago Sierra, the artist turned into prison warden, constructed a brick wall to completely seal off one part of a very large room in the museum. A small hole in the wall was used to slide food to the confined person. It was not made clear whether the occupant had prior experience in this type of work.

I heard a rumor that the museum was going to run daily tours to a local prison at the end of the exhibition for those who missed the show.

Rule # 72A

DEATH DOESN'T SELL. For some reason you don't see the high-class galleries showing works of art about death.



I made the work of art shown above, "Death Is Not Something To Take Lightly" over three years ago, and not a single gallery has shown any interest in buying it. I have it out on consignment to a local funeral parlor, and I'm quite hopeful because the owner is quite interested in contemporary art.

Rule # 73

IT PAYS TO HIRE A GOOD LAWYER. The prestigious Tate Gallery in London was undergoing a refurbishing program. One day a truckload of 120 bricks was delivered and placed in one of the galleries for storage. They were stacked two-high in a rectangular pattern and the workers went out for tea and forgot about the bricks.

The next day, when the museum opened, a visitor, unwittingly, tripped over the bricks and was seriously injured. The chap sued the museum for a lot of quid.

The lawyers for the Tate came up with a novel defense. They claimed that the bricks were a work of art and counter sued for kicking the art.

The case got a lot of attention in the press and throngs poured into the museum to see for themselves if the bricks were a work of art or an obstruction. Public opinion was strongly against the museum and it carried into the courtroom where it was very hard to find 12 jurors who thought that 120 plain bricks could possibly be a work of art.

The trial finally went on and the case was going poorly for the Tate. One of the lawyers for the museum was a very handsome bloke and he managed to have a clandestine affair with the forewoman of the jury. She believed his promise of marriage after the trial and she swore she would do anything for her intended. Well, to make a long story short, she did just that. The jury was sequestered in a nearby hotel and she visited each of the male jurors in his room and somehow convinced every one to vote for the museum.

You may wonder how I learned of this strange tale. Well, Judy and I were in London last month and stayed at a charming bed and breakfast. We noticed that our chambermaid was always crying so we asked her if we could help in any way. She poured out her story to us. You guessed it! She was the forewoman of the jury and, needless to say, her lawyer/lover was, indeed, a cad.

Reality Note: There was an exhibition at the Tate of 120 bricks, just as the story above relates.

Rule # 74

BUY A VIDEO CAMERA. WATER A PENIS, FILM IT GROWING AND YOU’L BE CALLED A SCINTILLATING ARTIST. Anna Jermaloewa, a Russian born artist now living in Vienna, had such a show in a local gallery. I understand she doctored the water with a dash of Viagra.



The art writer described the video as, “another type of psychological-sexual substitution; the male body becomes a symbolic watering bed...as colored watering utensils sprinkle nourishment onto the genital zones of one man (or various men) resulting in erect penises. Literally and figuratively we watch the springing up of phalluses, as if by some miraculous intervention...the work delivers an allegorical reflection on masculinity, fertility, and sex.”

Rule # 75

TWO-FERS* ARE THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE. The industrial revolution finally hit the art world in 2001 when two artists realized that they could turn out paintings faster than anyone else if they both painted on the same canvas at the same time! John Russell and Fabienne Audéoud gained fame and fortune by painting simultaneously on the same canvas. It was not made clear if John always painted on the right side of the canvas or if he was canvas-dexterous.

Their mass production efforts led to a series of 21 paintings, which were chosen to hang in exhibitions in London, Scotland and at Sotheby's in New York.

If you want to capitalize on this new trend in contemporary art why not get a group of painterly friends together for a "gang painting."

In case you were not familiar with John Russell's earlier work I copied the picture below from his Web page. Because the picture wasn't clear I have typed his unforgettable prose besides his masterpiece.

- *Two artists for the price of one*
-

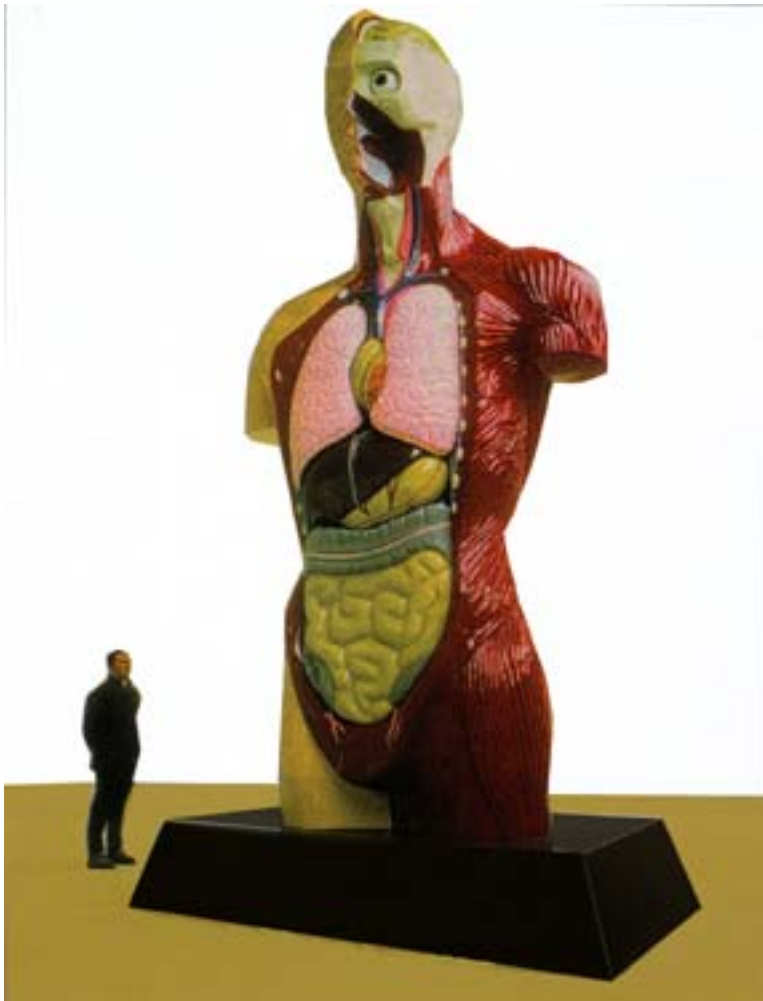


**REAL
REVOLUTION
MEANS
PEOPLE
CHOKING IN
THEIR OWN
PISS AND
SHIT AND
CUMS**

Rule # 76

MAKE A SPECTACLE OF YOUR ART AND THE WORLD WILL BEAT A PATH TO YOUR DOOR. An article in the Art Section of *The New York Times* in February 2001 reported that, “Spectacle is the buzzword in contemporary art these days, and Damien Hirst is its practitioner par excellence.”

The quintessence of this is shown in Hirst’s 20-foot tall painted bronze anatomical figure. It, ironically, is also the quintessence of “chutzpah” since this piece is a copy of a one-foot model manufactured as an inexpensive educational toy. A lawsuit followed which was settled, quietly, out of court. Hirst sold his work of art for about one million pounds to famed collector of spectacles Charles Saatchi.



Hirst is shown above next to his 20-foot high creation. The artist is reputed to have said that he is as tall as this sculpture when he stands on his wallet.

Rule # 77

UNDERSTAND WHAT IS ART. What could be more important for the aspiring artist? Nothing! So take the time to read a definition by Michael Kimmelman, influential art writer for *The New York Times*. He described a video by Paul McCarthy that, “rambles on for close to an hour and in which Mr. McCarthy hacks off the tip of one of his latex fingers with a cleaver. This takes a very long time. Fake blood pours out of the stump.”

The review continues, “*funny, painful to watch, embarrassing, silly, periodically sleep inducing: the video is unforgettable: the emotional effect is as indelible as almost anything in the long mixed-up history of American video and performance art.*”

Kimmelman then writes, “How’s that for a definition of art? Art, which often turns up in the most unexpected places, can occasionally be the equivalent of a wound that won’t heal, something unresolved, even annoying, that sticks in the brain notwithstanding your desperate desire to expunge it and your firm belief that it has no merit. The anger and frustration of your resistance is a secret sign of the work’s true value. Art that makes a lasting impression despite you is, after all, doing something noteworthy.”

See Paul McCarthy create a work of art by chopping off the tip of one of his latex fingers with a cleaver. Of course, by this definition, Lorena Bobbitt, who took a cleaver to hubby John’s, is an even greater artist.



Rule # 78

PERFORMANCE ART IS ALIVE AND WELL? I know I commented in an earlier Rule on how artists, who can't make it on their artistic ability, might turn to acting (in a performance piece) and be considered (by some) to be a real artist. Well, I thought this means of artistic expression had died out until I picked up a July 2, 2000 New York Times and read that performance art is back "in galleries, on the streets, in museums, in video, ---"

The prestigious Mathew Marks Gallery exhibited an artist who weighs 270 pounds and who appeared in a large (naturally) bunny costume filled with 146 pounds of navy beans (equal to the weight of his lover.) He moved ponderously in this outfit rendering, as per the Times writer:

" a hilarious and complicated meditation on relationships, the body, and doomed attempts to please another person. "

The Sculpture Center in New York City exhibited a performer who was seated atop a 10-foot tower, naked except for a thick dusting of flour over his black skin. He munched a stack of Wall Street Journals that he "seasoned" with ketchup and milk to aid in swallowing. He then regurgitates the contents to dispel the heavy metals and bleaches in the paper.

The article also spoke of a female artist who wore a red crinoline dress and carried a bowl of soapy water into the performance area. She sat on a stool, lifted her hefty skirt and proceeded to shave her groin area. Even though I understand her performance was well received I wonder how long it will take for her to be able to do an encore.

The Times writer finished up by stating that performance art:

"has placed the person and body of the artist center stage and allowed for a sense of self-mockery and playfulness to infiltrate a field often bent on the rigors of form and function."

All I can say is that if it is good enough for the Venice Biennale, the Whitney, and the galleries mentioned above it's worth having a go at it. Just mix the right pinch of playfulness with a pinch of self-mockery and you can act out your wildest fantasies and become a famous artist in the bargain.

P.S. I understand the National Enquirer tastes better than the Wall Street Journal, but that's a matter of personal preference.

Rule # 78A

BE AU COURANT. You have to visit all the new museums so you can cash in on the newest trends. Here's my report from the Tate Modern.

Two pieces especially caught my eye.

The first was a plain canvas that the artist had slit with a sharp instrument. That's it! At first viewing, it might look like a hoax. But, when you think about how many painters have slashed their canvasses after they've completed a painting. You realize that this artist was perceptive enough to know that what he was going to paint wouldn't be any good --- so he slashed the canvas beforehand. That's what you call Perceptual Conceptual Art.

The second piece I call to your attention was a continuous video of a naked man dancing. That's it! Well, not exactly, because this man's peanuts was as long as any I've ever seen outside of a Havana nightclub. It seemed to have a life of its own and moved in time to the music. I have it from a very reliable source that the reason this video appeared in the museum was that the Tate's head curator hoped to get a date with the nude dancer.

Rule # 78 B

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SEE CLEARLY TO BE A FINE ARTIST. Tracey Moffatt, a famous photographer whose work probably appears elsewhere in this book, was interviewed in ARTnews in February 2002. Part of the intensely stimulating interview appears below.

Q. What's visually inspiring to you?

A. Anything blurred and deeply out of focus

Rumor has it that Tracey is coming out with a line of designer eyeglasses that blur your vision. It will be sold in the gift shop of leading contemporary art museums. That doesn't sound like too bad an idea to me. It might be a good idea to put them on before entering some shows at your local MOCA.

Rule # 79

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE. You can only get so far on ability. Don't be embarrassed to put your name in lights. Try advertising on billboards, CNBC, the Super Bowl or even tasteful neon sign on the Sphinx.

The Guggenheim approached me several years ago about putting my name over the entrance of a new museum they were opening in Bilbao, Spain. All the famous contemporary artists had turned them down because who ever heard of Bilbao? I took a chance, paid their price and the rest is history



Rule # 80

KEEP YOUR NOSE TO THE GRINDSTONE. In the contemporary art world this is described as "process". Webster's Dictionary defines process *as a series of actions leading to an end.* But you must realize that to some in the art world the process is more important than the product. The methodical, repetitive, labor-intensive actions of an artist performing simple tasks elevate the product into art.

I'll give you some examples. One famous female artist displayed two massive boulders weighing 800 pounds in a New York gallery. One was atop the other and a long metal rod extended out from the rocks. At the bottom of the piece were particles of limestone dust which the artist had produced by spending five hours each day for several summers pushing the rod which turned the rocks, grinding the base of the rocks against whatever they were then resting.

Another well-known artist spent eights hours a day for years painting that day's date in white on a dark canvas. Paintings that could not be completed on the day of their inception were destroyed. The artist had produced over 1,900 such canvases by 1996 and was still going strong.

As a sideline for 16 years he mailed picture postcards to two different people that bore only the words " I got up at ____ " followed by the time. I had the pleasure of viewing some of these postcards in a museum recently. The experience was awe inspiring and opened up new vistas for me as it can for you. This has something to do with Conceptual Art, but I don't want to confuse you when you are so close to finishing this book.

Rule # 81

TRAIN YOUR VIDEO CAMERA ON THE SKY, THE EMPTY CORNER OF A ROOM, OR ON A HOLE BEING CUT IN A GALLERY WALL AND YOU'LL WIND UP AT THE WHITNEY. Yoko Ono, Gary Hill and William Anastasia, three first class artists, did just that--- with great success.

Ms. Ono's contribution was a live video of the sky above the museum relayed to a television monitor in a gallery of the museum. She had wanted to cut a hole in the ceiling of the top floor of The Whitney to expose the sky above, but the powers that be decided it would be cheaper to just use a video camera. Any viewer could look straight ahead at the monitor and see what's up.

Anastasi's work of art was a camera trained on a featureless corner of a room in the same gallery.

Hill cut out a piece of the gallery wall and stuck a TV monitor in the hole. The video showed the process of cutting out the hole. The art writer for *Frieze Contemporary Art* opined that Hill, "combined the most physical and most ephemeral of media, marking out the two extremes, and took a useful step forward between them."

These three pieces were shown together in one gallery of The Whitney in an exhibition during 2002 "The Projected Image in American Art 1964-77." In the past few years digital video cameras have become as easy to use as point-and-shoot cameras. So I suggest you get together with two friends and start videoing. Keep it simple, stupid.

Rule # 82 (Caution! Do not read this after eating.)

THERE IS NO LIMIT TO BAD TASTE. I don't mean this in the pejorative sense because who am I to slander one of the most famous Swiss female artists. Pipilotti Rist teamed up with the prestigious Luhring Augustine Gallery in New York City to teach artists that you can't stoop too low. As part of her exhibition at the gallery the artist created a memorable installation in the Ladies Room. She placed a miniature video camera in the toilet bowl and connected it to a television monitor, which faced the person seated on the toilet. The reviewer in ARTnews wrote that it offered:

the opportunity to spend an embarrassing moment with ourselves.

I understand the artist approached the American Standard Company about coming out with a Decorator Line of Pipilotti Rist Toilets.

P.S. The Luhring Augustine Gallery is making these videos available on the web at www.toilet.orgasm for those who can't get to the gallery.

Rule # 83

UNCLE BEN'S RICE IS ART. Suki Chan spent three weeks applying home-dyed rice to the window of an arts center using glue and the tip of a ballpoint pen. This was part of her installation in Manchester, England. Two art critics wrote a review in which they made some perceptive comments:

Her choice of windowpane as canvas is crucial for it allows the audience to see the work from all sides. It is possible for two people to see the same grain of rice from the same height and angle, yet from a different perspective.

I can just see two people exchanging places with each other so they could see the same grain from the other's perspective.

In another paragraph the reviewer's wrote:

Chan has cleverly placed a subtle but complex scenario before us, its cryptic guise allowing for endless interpretation.

How many times have I told you how important endless interpretation is? It is the key to success. Open a critic or curator's mind to endless interpretation and you will be putting Rice-a-Roni on the Whitney's front window. Create an installation with only one meaning and you're road kill.

Rule # 84

STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT. No sooner had Jeff's star risen high in the artistic skies above his *PUPPY* in Bilbao and Rockefeller City than an ad appeared in the art magazines and on the Web offering a limited edition memento.

He created a porcelain vase named "**PUPPY**" (see picture below) which was offered in a limited edition of 3,000. I e-mailed the dealer and learned that the base was part of the piece but, alas, the flowers are not included.

I heard via the sour grapevine that Jeff is dickering to become the TV spokesperson for Miracle-Grow.



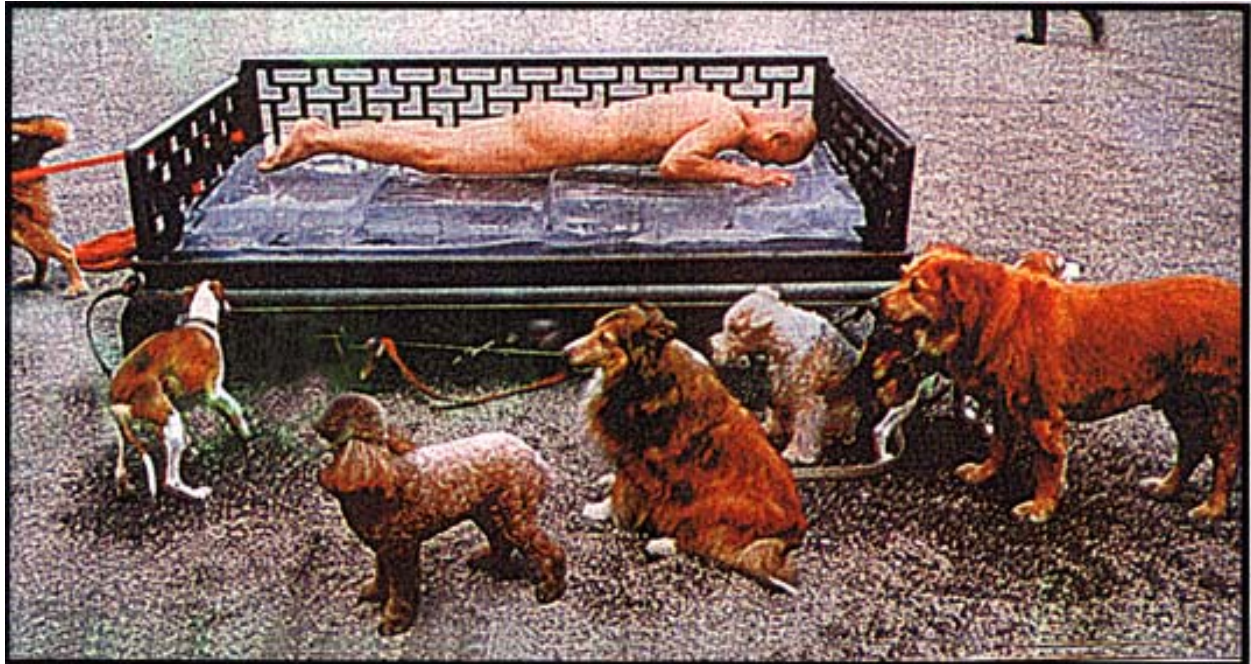
Rule # 85

FREEZE YOUR BALLS OFF, FOR ARTS SAKE. Zhang Huan, a Chinese artist, did just that and it led to fame and fortune. He lay naked (see photo below) on a block of ice, which he had placed on a traditional Chinese bed frame while the purebred dogs he had tied to the bed sat and watched in utter amazement. This masterpiece was exhibited at the prestigious P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York and received national attention via a report with photo in The New York Times.

Huan follows in the artistic tradition of the Hindu fakirs who walk on hot coals or lie on a bed of nails. However, they never made it to a contemporary art museum.

The artists other feats of artistic masochism and tests of endurance, while a bit too eerie to report on in this family book, so struck the fancy of eminent Miami art collectors Mera and Donald Rubell that they purchased thirty pieces for their collection.

HUAN ON THE ROCKS



Rule # 85A

IT'S UDDER NONSENSE. Cows, cows, cows --- the art world can't get enough of them. Even Janine Antoni, a premier contemporary artist, fell under the spell as you can see in the photo on the facing page. It is a self-portrait (of the artist). A writer for *Art World* commented in the September 2001 issue:

“A cow, identified by tag # 2038, nuzzles the water near her right breast. There is a suggestion that Antoni is nursing the cow, and she gazes down thoughtfully at the animal's head, her expression calm, even beatific.”

Antoni explained that:

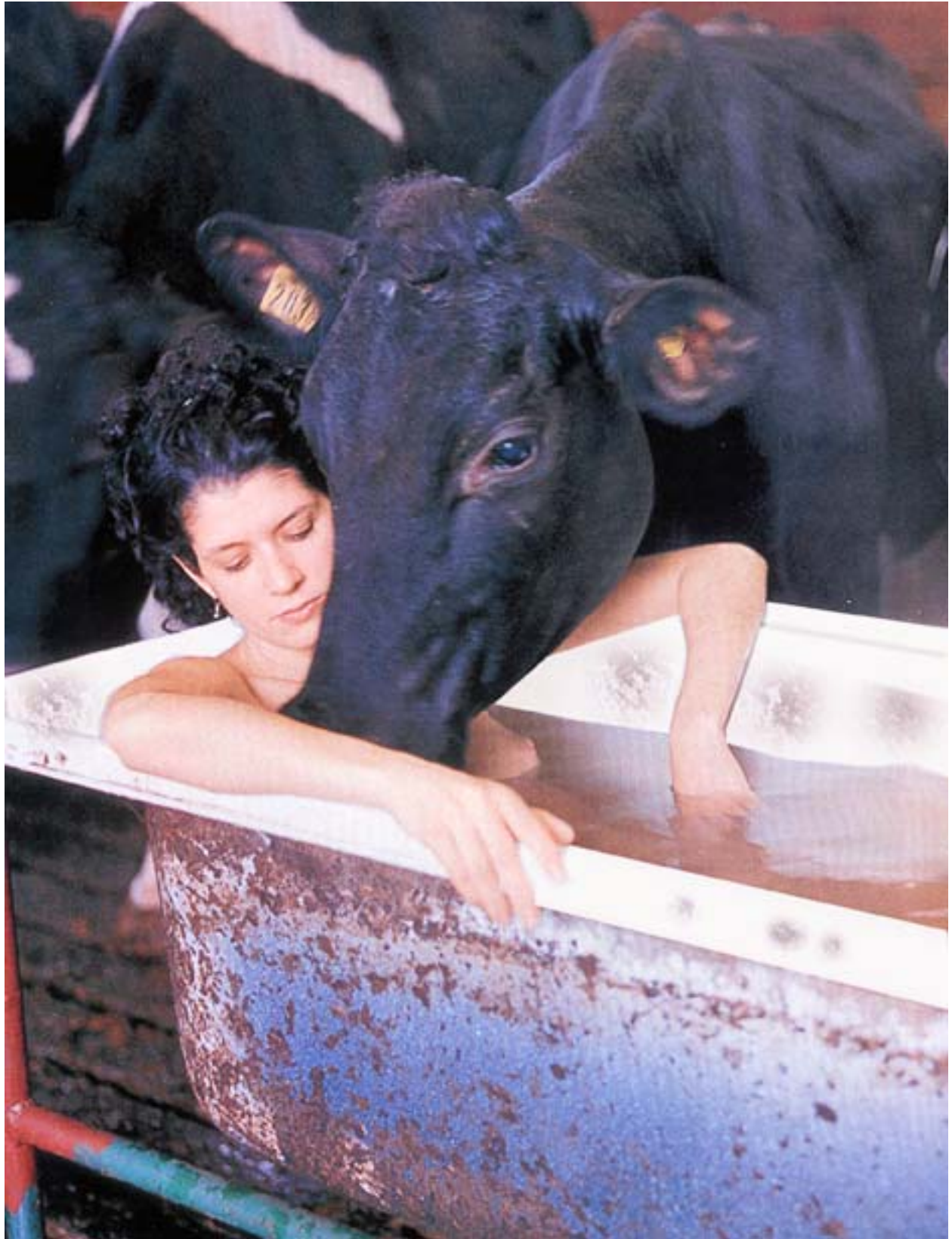
“The tag in the cow's ear both names it (2038) and reveals its identity as a biological machine. I wanted the tenderness of the image to exist in contrast to this reality.”

The art writer explained that:

“No less marked, in this image of a saintly looking woman suckling (implicit) a being larger than (human) life, is the invocation of the Madonna, whose bodily functions, Antoni notes, were restricted (no sex, no appetite) to nursing. The humility and grace of 2038 are indistinguishable from its religious and familial apostasy*.”

I have it from a completely reliable source that Antoni tried to get Playboy magazine to give her a centerfold spread, but that Hugh Hefner refused to show a naked cow in his magazine. However, Borden's, in an attempt to spur point-of-purchase milk sales, is considering putting the photo on its milk containers to replace photos of missing children.

* Webster defines apostasy as “renunciation of a religious faith”, in case you aren't erudite enuf.



Rule # 86

GIVE THEM THE SHIRT OFF YOUR BACK. Charles LaBelle, a Los Angeles conceptual artist, teaches us that there is more than one way "to skin a cat", or in his case "to wash a shirt."

He cut up an unremarkable white dress shirt into two-inch squares. He numbered each square and stuffed each piece in a balloon that he swallowed. He waited for these bits to go through his digestive track and was able to salvage all but one piece. LaBelle then reconstructed the shirt, propped it on a torso mannequin and exhibited it behind Plexiglas next to his drawings of urban L.A.

A review of his piece which is titled, "Disappear-Shirt That Passed Through My Body", stated:

Side by side the shirt and the drawings seem to propose that a wanderer passes through the city much as a shirt passed through his body, coming out the same but different, stained by whatever insider's knowledge she or he acquires along the way.

What have you, my reader, learned from Rule 86?

- 1. If you are a drug smuggler you might want to contact LaBelle to bring in your next stash.**
- 2. If you are a laundry man you might not want to pick up at LaBelle's house.**

Rule # 95

BECOME A FASHION DESIGNER. Sometimes you have to sneak in the back door to get into a museum. Since the Guggenheim Museum put on a giant showing of Giorgio Armani clothing, why not quit art school and enroll in the nearest Fashion Institute. There is a slight catch though. You might have to make a donation to a museum of \$ 15,000,000. Other museums quickly jumped on the fashion bandwagon. (This is a variation on one of my earlier Rules that suggested you bribe a curator.)

Rule # 95A

QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN FLOSS. You know about Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece, but you may not know about artist Rebecca Holland's Golden Floss. *Art Papers Magazine* reported on the artist's show in a San Antonio gallery, which included a gold-leafed piece of dental floss dangling from an overhead beam. It was placed so, "that it hung just above the concrete floor." The art critic wrote that it was, "Barely discernible, and in fact easily missed. In its near invisibility, the impermanence and fragility of this work gave it a sense missing in Holland's framed works."

The magazine article included a large black and white photograph of the floss hanging in the middle of the gallery. I don't know who was being fleeced.

So if you can find a way to stress near invisibility, impermanence and fragility in your art you will be on your way to visibility, fame and fortune.

Rule # 95B

NUMBERS COUNT! *ARTnews* magazine asked prominent art professionals to name an "overrated" or "underrated" artist. The director of the Museum of Modern Art in Vienna put forth the name of Lorand Hegy, a Polish artist living in France, as his choice as an underrated artist. What sets Hegy apart is that he just paints numbers on multiple canvases. "Starting in 1965 he began painting numbers --- beginning with the number one. By late 2000 he was up to the number 700 million. He will paint these numbers until he is dead."

"The paintings are black on white. He dips his brush in the paint and paints as long as the color remains. Slowly the difference between the black and white paint disappears. Then you can only imagine the numbers. It is about dualism --- good/bad, dark/light, and man/God. There is a mystical, spiritual aspect to his work that comes from his Polish-Slavic background."

(Editor's note: I couldn't have said it any better myself.)

Rule # 87

IT'S GREAT ART TO GO MOPING AROUND. The same art critic you read about in Rule # 86 also gets credit for reviewing the well-known Mexican artist Gabriel Orozco's photographs of his old East German yellow moped. Gabriel drove his around East Berlin looking for similar specimens. Each time he found one he propped his scooter beside it and took a picture. He struck 40 times and the photos were exhibited in a prestigious New York Gallery.

The art reviewer wrote:

For all the simplicity of the process the artist has made us scour endlessly along the trails of possible meaning that emanate from it.

The reviewer then quotes the different meanings attributed to this piece by other critics such as:

"a fabulous, ridiculous love story, a fairy tale of serendipity, wandering and being lost."

" an amusing meditation on the links between identity and alterity,"

The reviewer's opinion was that:

Orozco's out to squeeze from fangless gestures the music of our shared quotidian drift, the song of our moving through an indefatigably erratic world that once in a while will offer an arrangement of things enticing and beautiful and strange enough to somehow mirror our social arrangements.*

You, my reader, can take advantage of Rule # 87 by buying an old Edsel and driving it around Detroit until you find similar antediluvian* models with which to pair up your car in a photo. It may take a while to get 40 photographs but I can give you the name of the gallery that showed Orozco's work and I am sure that they will want to "Buy American."

* Per Webster: belonging to each day; everyday

** Per Webster: antiquated

Rule # 88

IF THEY UNDERSTAND YOUR WORK YOU'RE DEAD IN THE WATER.

Curators are searching high and low for artists who can consistently produce work they can't comprehend.

One Brooklyn-based artist, Taching Hseih, produced a piece in which he punched a time clock every hour, every day and night for one year. In another he spent a year living in a cell where he did not speak, write, read or listen to music. A former director of a new museum in New York City, who admires the work of Hseih said:

It's brilliant work, and, fortunately, I continue to fail to understand it.

However, my readers must understand there is a fine line between real enigmatic art and trash. The senior curator of painting and sculpture at MOMA in N.Y. wrote:

There is art that seems inscrutable for inscrutability's sake and thus not worth the effort. I think that there's a kind of art made now that is difficult only in the sense that it is obscure and theory-heavy and the art-world insiders get a kind of smug satisfaction in how complicated their understanding of the piece is. But the truth of the matter is that such work is coded to be accessible to insiders. You can spend the rest of your life making fancier explanations, but the point is, it's there to be explained. That's not real difficulty."

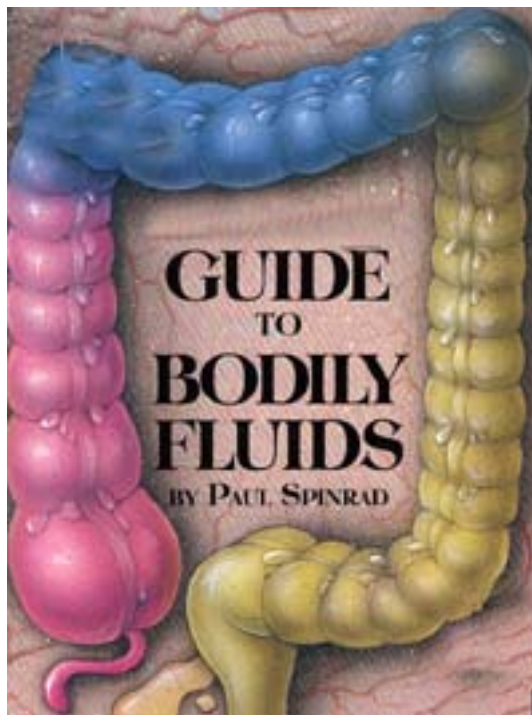
I leave it to you, my readers, to be able to create art that is inscrutable but not for inscrutability's sake. But don't make it scrutable --- or you will be even worse off than you are now.

Rule # 89

IF YOU DON'T PAINT WITH BODILY FLUIDS YOUR WORK AIN'T WORTH A S---. The most important course in any M.F.A. program is Bodily Fluids 101--- and with good reason. Paint is out: B.F.'s are in. What was the last time you saw a painting being exhibited in contemporary art museum in which the artist used real paint? About the only time this happens is if the artists drips the paint on the canvas or if he only uses one color. The rest is all fluids.

I discussed this with my "shrink" and I'm too embarrassed to report what he said about those who delight in B.F.'s and B.M.'s

But, if all you care about is becoming famous I can make one suggestion. I saw what looks like an ordinary air sickness bag except that it had a window on one side, so you can see what is inside the bag. I recommend you buy a few dozen of these bags and pass them out on your next bumpy airplane ride or at the next cutting-edge art opening you attend. Then head for the Chelsea art district in Manhattan with your collection and you'll have the gallery owners eating out of your hand.



This is the textbook used in Bodily Fluids 101 at Yale and U.C.L.A. Try and pick up a copy, but I wouldn't buy a used one.

Rule # 91.

CONFESS! CONFESS! CONFESS If your priest or psychiatrist refuses to listen to any more of your disgusting, sordid confessions make them into a work of art. You'll get a load of your mind and, at the same time, become a famous artist. Ask Tracey Emin. She's a rich and famous artist and doesn't have any guilt feelings. Her seminal piece, *Everyone I Have Slept With*, is a tent on which she has embroidered the names of all the people with whom she has had sex. It's a pretty big tent.

Her companion piece, *My Bed*, was exhibited at the Tate Gallery! All it was --- was her bed --- which had been stained with bodily fluids and other accoutrements of a night of sex.

So let it all hang out, no holes barred, and your work will be hanging in a museum, and you can tell your shrink to go ____k him or herself. I wouldn't suggest you say the same to your priest.

I guess this is what is called Art Cathartic.

Rule # 92

BEWARE AN ARTIST IN WOLVES' CLOTHING. ARTFORUM magazine carried an art review of a gallery exhibition in Milan, Italy of the work of a young local artist. The review was translated from the Italian so I can only assume that something was lost in the translation:

" The lower floor of the gallery was devoted to a mysterious performance: two figures wearing wolf-masks and jockey's silks, holding cudgels carved from soap and whips made of licorice, gestured threateningly towards each other. What made this piece especially interesting was that although it was difficult to guess the artist's motives, one sensed a certain underlying coherence. "

I guess this is what is called Art Milanese.

Rule # 93 THE GOLDEN RULE

BUY AN ART FRANCHISE. If you want to jump-start your career become an "Earl Bronsteen Franchisee". For a relatively modest investment you can achieve your lifetime goal of artistdom. And you won't have to read any more Rules. Even if you can't paint, draw or sculpt this need not stop you from becoming an internationally known installation artist. Just the power of the Earl Bronsteen name will add the panache you need to become famous.

NO MATCHBOOK COVERS TO SEND IN!

All you need is:

Easy access to a junkyard or second hand store.
\$ 2,500 for your franchise fee.

That's all it takes and you will be given an exclusive franchise in your area. No other artist can use the "Earl Bronsteen Franchise" trademark within one mile of your studio. Begin using the Earl Bronsteen name and you'll be making and selling your own installations in a few days. You will receive a manual showing how to scavenge for trash and how to transform it into works of art.

If you don't know what your finished works of art mean you'll find fifteen different descriptions that have been written in *Artspeak* so that they can be used interchangeably to describe any work of art.

This is the Telemarketing Age and the only way you'll be able to compete with other artists is by consistently calling up museum curators and gallery owners and telling them about your work. To make it easy for you to make "cold" canvassing calls I have scripted a telephone conversation. All you have to do is follow along.

(Telephone rings)

Hello this is the ---- Gallery

May I speak to the person in charge?

What do you want to speak to him about?

It's private and very important.

Who shall I say is calling?

John Doe and tell him I'm an Earl Bronsteen Franchisee.

I'll put you right through.

Thanks

SEND IN YOUR \$2,500 TODAY AND BE AN ARTIST TOMORROW!

Rule # 94

IT'S STILL GREEK TO ME. One more artist struck pay dirt by having an exhibition of blurred photographs. Dimitris Antonitsis' source material was a set of 73 slides, depicting a Greek family in the 1970's, which a gallery owner found inside a piece of old furniture. The artist either had a faulty scanner or a brilliant idea because all of the photo-transfer prints he produced were blurred (see below).

The writer who reviewed this show for *Art in America* rhapsodized that the "lives of the family shown in the photos take on a universal quality through a blurring of the vignettes with digital manipulation."

So **RULE # 132** points out that an aspiring artist should purchase the cheapest scanner and printer money will buy and then all his/her digital photos will be blurred without his/her having to do any hard (creative) work.



Dimitris Antonitsis: Untitled, from the "Blurred Fiction" series, 2001, ink-jet print on canvas; at Steven Makris.

Rule # 96

YOU SHOULD GO TO QUEENS, NEW YORK IF YOU ARE AN EAST ASIAN ARTIST AND INTO BODY ART. The Queens Museum's exhibition, **Performance and Body Art From East Asia**, was reviewed in *Art in America's* April 2002 issue that carried five pages of photos and comments. Excerpts from comments about six of the artists follow:

1. Zuang Huan "in a notable early piece covered himself in fish oil and honey and sat for three hours in a fly-infested toilet. At the Queens Museum he was represented by documentation of a prior performance at the Seattle Art Museum in which he led an assembly of naked volunteers through various ritualistic activities, culminating in a melee in which they threw eggs and bread at him from atop some scaffolding." I believe the piece was titled "Egg McHuan".



One gal in the front row refused to take off her shoes. Modesty or perversion?

2. Chinese artist Qi Li was depicted in a video by Wang Xiaoshuai, a filmmaker, who told of Qi Li's artistic attempt to lie naked on a piece of ice until he died. "In the course of this performance he lost consciousness and was taken to a hospital. Suffering from the after-effects of his act and afraid to admit the "failure" of the work, he hid for six month's in a friend's house before ultimately committing suicide."

3. "Internationally acclaimed Chinese artist Xu Bing dealt with the uneasy existence of East and West with a slide show in which a pig covered with Western writing seems to copulate with a mannequin covered with Chinese calligraphy." Because this book is written for a family audience I did not reproduce the photo of pig cum mannequin.

4. Chun-chi Lin, a native Chinese who moved to Germany, was represented "by a video in which he expresses his frustration with life in a foreign culture with such gestures as burning a piece of paper covered with English text and calligraphy, crumbling the ashes into wine and spitting the mixture against a wall."

It is possible that his piece was also intended as a comment on cheap German wines.

5. The work of Korean artist Michael Joo is also included. “In a lyrical video he first appears to be swimming naked through mounds of white sand, which is actually MSG, the synthetic salt which many Westerners associate with their corner Chinese restaurant. The final sequence takes the still naked artist to a Korean mountainside where wild elk gently lick the salt from his skin.”

I guess this story disproves the old wife’s tale that elk are allergic to MSG.

6. Korean artist Atta Kim showed photographs of naked men and women each squeezed into “clear Plexiglass boxes which are placed in public places. Not shown in Queens, but shown in Berlin, was Kim’s video of a naked couple boxed together who decided to ease the tedium by making love.” I

wonder why this video was omitted from the Queens show. I can only surmise that is another thinly veiled comment on cheap Queens' wines.

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3. "Internationally acclaimed Chinese artist Xu Bing dealt with the uneasy existence between East and West with a slide show in which a pig covered with Western writing seems to copulate with a mannequin covered with Chinese calligraphy." I thought pigs were inscrutable.

4. Chun-chi Lin, a native Chinese who moved to Germany was represented “by a video in which he expresses his frustration with life in a foreign culture with such gestures as burning a piece of paper covered with English text and calligraphy, crumbling the ashes into wine, sipping the concoction and spitting the mixture against a wall.” It is possible that his piece was also intended as a comment on cheap German wines.



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Rule # 97

DESTROY EVERYTHING YOU OWN AND CALL IT A WORK OF ART. Michael Landy, a British conceptual artist, gathered everything he owned (7,006 items), moved them to a vacant store on Oxford Street in London and, with the help of 12 assistants, shredded everything and turned it all into granules. Fortunately he included his own artwork in the destruction.

Landy calls the piece *An Examination of Consumerism*: "In a world that is quite unstable, people find *consumption* a strong stabilizing force in their lives. I wanted to find out why. We all have consumer choices; this is mine," the artist explained to an art writer for the New York Times.

I think that *destruction* is a strong stabilizing force in the lives of some artists so don't overlook this possibility, if your career needs a jump-start.

Rule # 97A

IF YOU LOVE ART GO TO A BURLESQUE HOUSE. Performance art probably started with Minsky's Burlesque and Sally Rand. In February 2002 "ART PAPERS magazine" extolled the "virtues" of a performance by a group known as *a.k.a.* which:

"Included the video of a train in motion in the background as the pink-haired bride raised her dress to reveal her unprotected femininity. Her pubic hairs became public and waved in the breeze created by a semicircle of plastic fans...as she performed a series of slow-motion symbolic actions..."

The art writer wrote that the piece had to do with women's roles and that it ended with the eight women "screaming simultaneously in a nightmarish vignette seemingly expressing unfettered rage against restraints by men. Interestingly enough, some women in the audience were apparently close to joining the performers in the collective screaming..."

Only a few men in the audience gave vent to their emotions and yelled, "Take it off!"

I wanted to include a photo of the pink-haired bride with her hair waving in the breeze of the plastic fans, but my publisher thought that it might be a bit much.

Rule # 98

FLUID FETISH. Manglano-Ovalle is another successful artist to cash in on bodily effluents. His contribution is an installation containing two real sperm banks presented at the Henry Art Gallery in Seattle as a gleaming minimalist sculpture.

He is quoted as saying, "I called up other artists and curators and said, 'I really want your sperm for my piece.' Some people were all too willing, but they also thought it meant we had some sort of relationship. I didn't want to deal with that level of intimacy."

In December 2000, I read in The New York Times that Tom Freedman* had taken a small amount of his own feces and polished it into "a perfect sphere, a half millimeter in diameter, and centered above a white pedestal." What a way to ring out the old year.

TIP TO MY READERS: The only human excreta that has not been used is earwax. The first artist to create a work using wax gathered from 1000 redheads will be in the Whitney, for sure.

*Note re Tom Freedman: Tom took a plain white piece of paper and stared at it for 1,000 hours at various times from 1992 to 1997. That's it. Now the beauty of this piece is that who's to say if Tom really ever looked at this sheet of paper for more than one minute. This is real minimalist art in that only a minimal amount of work is required to produce a museum quality work of art.

The art critic for CVA magazine said that:
"821,000 Hours of Staring" shows the artist's desire to ally himself with the viewer, creating a communal experience wherein the viewer's encounter with the work mimics the artist's process of making it.

RULE # 98A

HAIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW? Wenda Gu is my kinda guy. This Chinese born, New York artist, considers body wastes as the most powerful medium for art. He excludes urine and feces (Editor's note: picky, picky). For his first exhibition he collected used sanitary napkins from 60 women around the world and displayed them on white silk pillows in large vitrines accompanied by statements and drawings of the women. This exhibition stopped his career dead in its tracks for four years.

He then wisely switched to using human hair instead of human blood and today his pieces sell for over \$100,000. For one piece he collected hair clippings made them into a curtain.

In 1998, he walked around downtown Vancouver dressed in half tuxedo, half scholar's robe and with a donkey at his side talking to people for a day. I'm not sure if he carried a pooper-scooper.



Rule # 98B

PUTTING A NEW FACE ON “PROCESS” IN THE ART WORLD. Marina Ekman, the artist in question, exhibited hundreds of photographs of male penises at a gallery in San Francisco (where else?) What made this showing a tad unique is that the artist became a hooker for a two-year period just so she could photograph her customers’ penises after orgasm.

An article in *Art Papers* quoted the artist as saying she “became intrigued with the artistic possibilities of being in a room with a stranger requesting money in exchange for sexual favors.” Ekman “wanted to somehow ‘capture’ the men who visited prostitutes” and “decided to become a working girl” in order to create a multimedia documentary.

Initially the project was very hard on Ekman, but after a time the process “got easier and easier.”

I must warn some of my impressionable readers to use extreme caution in the application of this Rule. I realize you yearn for recognition, but before you throw yourself too deeply into a potentially controversial project I suggest you take a cold shower.

The author of the article in *ArtPapers* wrote that “To view these photographs as a male, an artist and a writer --- considering oneself to possess a modicum of political open mindedness --- and to recoil at the images and to want to flee from the space is, in retrospect, a gift, an opportunity to question one’s own responses to this work and other such imagery.

Rule # 99

RECREATE HISTORY AS A WORK OF ART. I saw a wonderful installation that consisted of a reproduction of an old wooden boat (suspended in mid air by wires) which had hundreds of wooden arrows embedded in its structure.

If it hadn't been for a small sign nearby I never would have figured out what this piece was all about. Cai Guo-Qiang, a famous Chinese born/New York artist, told a story that during a war many, many years ago, one side had run out of ammunition (arrows) and was facing imminent defeat. A soldier was ordered to go out and find 10,000 arrows. At dusk, he took a large boat into the river and steered it to within range of the enemy's archers. He hid under a bale of straw as the arrows rained down in torrents on the vessel and stuck into the wood and hay. As morning approached he steered his arrow-filled boat back to his compatriots who, sure enough, used their enemy's arrows to defeat them in the fierce battle that raged the next day.

I don't remember if this was a true story or a legend but it made me realize that there's potentially an artistic gold mine in retelling old stories and legends.

I'll show you how have I capitalized on this
on the next page:

The Life and Legend of Lady Godiva (as told by Earl Bronsteen).

I'm sure you remember the legend of Lady Godiva. Well the legend was true, but only partially. Lady Godiva did, indeed, ride naked through the streets of Coventry, England but it was so dark out when she went for her ride that she mounted a cow instead of a horse by mistake. Subsequent generations of staid Britishers couldn't believe she rode a cow so they changed the story to report she road a horse. You will notice the closed doors behind the cow. Legend has it that all the doors of the homes were closed and the windows shuttered at the time of Godiva's ride. In the 17th century the legend was expanded to tell of how one window was held ajar, by someone named Tom, so that he could peek out at the passing parade. That's where the expression "Peeping Tom" came from.



Rule # 100

USE A POPULAR SONG TITLE AS YOUR INSPIRATION FOR YOUR NEXT INSTALLATION. Maurizio Cattelan, an artist, did just that after listening to a recording of “Catch a Falling Star and Put it in Your Pocket.” His English being notso good, his interpretation of the song title slightly missed the mark (see photo below). However, his installation brought him worldwide notoriety in the secular and clerical worlds. Church groups apparently took offense at the implication that the Pope would not have been able to catch a falling meteor and put it in his habit. This piece brought him fortune as well as fame as this installation was auctioned at Christie’s for \$886,000!!! Who says people living in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones.



The only way to top this masterpiece is to try and convince a rabbi to lie on the floor and have him surrounded by matzoh balls. You know the joke about how hard a daughter-in-law’s matzoh balls are. It sounds like a Kodak moment to me.

Rule # 101

IT PAYS TO BE COCKY. How would you feel if you were a cockroach and had your picture on the cover of ARTnews? The only thing close would be if you were a fashion model and your picture appeared on the cover of Sports Illustrated's Swimsuit Issue.

Catherine Chalmers is an acclaimed artist who “has spent the better part of the last decade raising frogs, praying mantises, snakes, and mice in her SoHo loft. Her larger-than-life color photographs of these animals doing interesting things --- mostly eating other animals, have earned her art-world acclaim.”

She buys live cockroaches (wholesale) and puts them in her refrigerator for fifteen minutes to immobilize them. Then she paints them (see photo) and photographs them in a setting she has staged. The magazine writer wrote, "Chalmer's staging ground helps her raise questions about the relationship between nature and artifice." This is similar to the questions raised by readers of Sports Illustrated's Swimsuit Issue as they stare at the bosom and bottom of Pamela Anderson.



The "ARTnews" writer offered the following insight into the mind of a cockroach-painter. "After a day of painting roaches, I'm on pins and needles," Chalmers says, "I want to do roach races. I want to make a racecourse and blow air on them and watch them go. When the chaos breaks out, it's really interesting to see a roach panic."

Chalmers sells her 40x60 inch photos for \$ 5,000. Roach powder included gratis.

BONUS

Anyone who has had the stamina to read this far in my book is entitled to a reward. If you send me a photo of any work of art that you have made, I will evaluate and grade it. I will tell you which of my Rules you have followed correctly and which Rules you should reread.

My email is artist1926@earthlink.net

Please no SPAM, unless X-Rated.

RULE # 102

DISINTEGRATION IS SWEET. Subtitle: Sour Grapes. I had the pleasure of viewing a fascinating installation by a very fine artist, Zoe Leonard, at the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami, FL. The floor of a large room was covered with over 100 pieces of fruit, that had had the insides taken out. The skins were rotting and disintegrating.

Someone at the museum told me that the prestigious Paula Cooper Gallery in New York City, which represents Leonard, was selling an individual piece of fruit for \$1000.

Since my business had been slow I decided to “knock off” Leonard’s work. I created a new generation of *Mummified Fruit* that has many advantages over the original. First, the fruit is made of plastic, so it will never disintegrate. Second, I have used a zipper instead of having the fruit sewn, which adds a very contemporary feeling. And thirdly, and possibly the most important to the discriminating art collector, I am selling my fruit for only \$99. Have a banana?



Rule # 103

NO NAME IS POSSIBLE FOR THIS RULE. An article in Contemporary Visual Arts contained a critique of a work the writer saw in Limerick in which, “the artist, Sandra Johnston, lay naked on the gallery floor and recounted for the hushed audience her exploration of the hotel room she stayed in for twenty-four hours up until the morning of her performance.”

She had persuaded the management of the hotel to let her have the room, without having it cleaned after the previous occupants left. “The experience she describes is one full of dregs of whiskey, full ashtrays, scents and shed hair, and lying naked between the soiled sheets to breath in the presence of those recently departed guests. It is a faintly disgusting recollection of a night and day in which a solitary young woman discovered what harrowing tales were hanging in the atmosphere of the hotel room.” And all the while she “wrings a strange black oily paste between the fingers of one hand.” It turns out that the distillate was created by the artist by rubbing butter into abandoned newspapers---booty of the abandoned room.”

A cynic might say that the artist asked to rent a room that had not been cleaned as a way of saving money, and when her friends discovered her in this dreadful room she made up the “performance” as a way of saving face. The art writer, however, put it differently stating that “the artist invites us to the threshold of her vulnerability, for it is in that perplexing, vertiginous place that her art gains the power it holds over us.”

Rule # 104

SPIT! You heard me --- spit! A Swiss female performance duo did just that and wound up with much acclaim and their photo in “Contemporary Visual Arts”, a British arts magazine sold worldwide. They performed two separate pieces both of which involve the artists repeatedly taking turns cradling the other’s head in her lap and dribbling the fluid contents from her own mouth into the open mouth of her partner. They used wine as the liquid of choice in their 1997 masterpiece “Wine to Slaver”, and in 1998 made a quantum leap forward with their piece “From Milk to Slaver”.

The writer for the magazine put his pen to paper and opined, “these artists are able to invest their work with a strength that is drawn, somewhat ironically, from their own physical vulnerability.”

This is a very advanced Rule and requires delicacy and breath mints.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Rule # 105

DON'T BE TOO HARD ON YOURSELF; LET OTHERS DO IT FOR YOU. Marina Abramovic, a well-known Belgrade-born artist, performed at a studio in Naples where she set out a table covered with various items, including a card with the following instructions: "There are 72 items on the table that you can use on me in any way you desire." Among the items were perfume, paint, wine, matches, nails, and a gun.

Photographs documenting the six-hour performance show the artist with writing on her face; blood from a cut on her chest; a chain around her neck; a loaded gun that someone made her hold to her throat; a man kissing her face; and another ripping open her shirt. Throughout she stares as if in a daze. In some photos tears run down her cheeks.

The artist stated in a recent interview for ARTnews that, "At the time there was all this criticism about how body art was sick and so on. This work turned the criticism around."

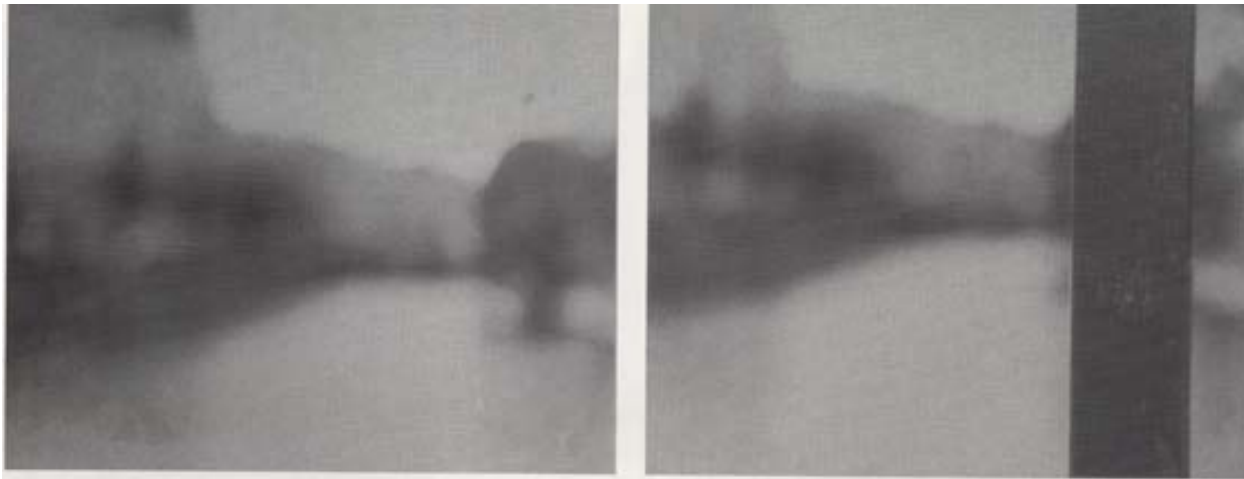
This Rule combines the best parts of interactive art with the best parts of masochism.

Rule # 106

DID YOU KNOW THAT WALGREEN'S ONE HOUR PHOTO DEPARTMENT WILL GIVE YOU CREDIT FOR ANY PICTURES THAT DON'T COME OUT? Well fortunately Uta Barth, a famous photographer, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art were not aware of this rebate policy. The two pictures Barth took (see below) came back completely out of focus and it didn't take long for The Met to purchase them. This is not a joke in the traditional sense because big money changed hands.

The Contemporary Art Museum of Houston showed fifty of Barth's works in 2001, many like the ones pictured below. Their curator wrote that Barth's photos are "deceptively simple and question the traditional functions of pictures and our expectations of them." (Editor's note: "question" is not a strong enough word.)

So it seems that all you, my readers, have to do is go through your old prints and see which are the most out of focus (and deceptively simple) and send them off to the curator of photography at the Met. Their check should be in the return mail.



Rule #107

WALK ON WATER. Roman Signer, a Swiss artist, is relatively unknown in the United States, but an article in *Art in America* tried to change that in its June 2001 issue. The magazine described how the artist, a graduate of the James Bond School of Art, took a brief kayak trip, not on water as you might expect, but directly on a country road. His kayak was attached to a small van by a towline. He climbed in, gave a thumbs up sign to the van driver and video photographer and went careening down the road at 20 miles per hour.

The article pointed out that, “At one point, Signer passes some wide-eyed cows which, inexplicably, do not scatter, but, instead, start galloping frantically beside him as if they can’t get enough of this astonishing rift in their routine.” I don’t know if the cows or the art writer were more affected. The writer opined, “the complex power of this piece begins to sink in--- and also there is the work’s poetic resonance involving multiple associations and layers of meaning.” Bessie couldn’t have put it any better.

The article described many other works including, “a toy remote-controlled helicopter caught in a small room with no possibility of escape. The helicopter flew up and down, back and forth and occasionally collided with the walls, each time with serious damage. In the video, it’s both captivating and disconcerting to watch the helicopter slowly smash itself to bits while trying to fly. In the end, when it’s lying on its side, twitching like an animal in its last agony, you’re ready to weep, except for an insistent rational voice in the brain announcing that this is only a ridiculous toy helicopter. Dear reader, I hope you are not too choked up to get on with your art career.” SEE PHOTOS ↓ ↓ ↓



*This spread, video stills of Roman Signer's **Kayak**, 2000, in which the artist is towed along a country road in a kayak; outside St. Gallen, Switzerland. All Signer works this article, unless otherwise noted, are actions documented on videotape by Aleksandra Signer.*



Rule # 130

PLAY SCRABBLE IN PORTUGUESE. Brazilian artist Rivane Neuenschwander did just that and had her work exhibited at ArtPace in San Antonio, Texas. The art writer for *Sculpture* commented on her work by noting that,

“The artist explored the concepts of containment and travel with an installation entitled *Scrabble*. Cardboard boxes were cut and reassembled to form an intricate path across the gallery floor, which was covered with San Antonio newspapers and dehydrated grapefruit with letters from the Portuguese alphabet. Visitors were free to enter these spaces and engage in their own games with the fruit balls. This playful spirit was also present in the artist's other works.”

I guess in San Antonio a ‘playful spirit’ is not quite what it is in other cities.

As you can see from the picture below not too many people were playing Portuguesean Scrabble when the photographer happened by.



Rule # 109

TWINKLE, TWINKLE EQUALS THIRTY GRAND. Perhaps the most prestigious contemporary art award in Great Britain is the Turner Prize that is worth about \$30,000. Martin Creed won the prize in 2001, and well he should have, for his piece “The Lights Going On and Off.” His masterpiece was a large empty room with lights that flicker on and off every five seconds! Read what a prestigious director of the Tate Gallery that established the prize had to say, “I don’t think he was a favorite at first but as the judges came to know the work, they were more and more impressed.”

The prestigious judge’s issued a statement saying they,
admired the work’s strength, vigor, wit and sensitivity to the site and that it came out of the tradition of minimal and Conceptual art.

Creed’s previous works include a room of half-filled balloons and a project in which he stuck one-inch cubes of masking tape to every wall of a building.



Rule # 110

DROP AN APPLE EVERY FIVE MINUTES. Yes that's all you have to do to have your art shown in a prestigious gallery in The Big Apple. Artist Stephen Finch rigged a long narrow tube high above the floor of Postmasters, a N.Y.C. gallery, and tilted it gently downwards. *Frieze* art magazine wrote that every morning he filled the tube with a line of fresh apples. Every five minutes a bar released one apple so that it dropped onto the green Astroturf carpet below and bounced off in a random direction.

The writer reported that Finch's "Composition in Red and Green" is at once a demonstration and representation of gravity (à la Sir Isaac) and to the biblical Fall (Adam and Eve) It's greatest achievement is how it structures the viewer's experience. As you look up, you feel the tantalizing sensation of not quite knowing when the apple will drop the work prompts a more general self-consciousness about what it is to gaze at art objects, awaiting epiphanies."

I don't know what sort of reception this exhibition received but another gallery owner told me he thought he saw the owner of Postmasters, a shawl over her face, selling apples in SoHo.



Composition in Red and Green shown in the Isaac Newton Room at Postmasters in the Big Apple.

RULE # 111

USE THE POST OFFICE TO GET THE STAMP OF APPROVAL FOR YOUR ART. Would you think that you could just mail a few letters and your art would be shown at a prestigious gallery in New York City? Well, it happened to Alighiero Boetti. His piece, which had not been exhibited since 1973, was shown at Sperone Westwater in New York City in 2001.

The work consists of 42 soberly framed collages, each composed of 120 envelopes. Each of the envelopes bore 7 Italian stamps, each of a different color. He had to buy 35,280 stamps plus 5,040 envelopes and then arrange the stamps in 120 different color configurations. Then he traveled to 120 different cities to mail five of the letters to himself in Turin. [Did you get all that?]

The art writer for *Art in America* was quite taken with this work and wrote, “The post office’s circular cancellation marks float like bubbles across the collage. The stamps and envelopes add up to a room-sized installation that dramatizes the intersection of several discreet cultural systems: a government-sponsored communication network, monetary values, national geography, the calendar, the esthetic of the grid and the pop esthetic of the color chart.”

(Rule continued on next page.)

Rule # 112

DEFECATION = CONTEMPORARY ART. Or so Belgian artist Wim Delvoye, ARTFORUM magazine and a Museum in Antwerp would have you believe. It took the artist eight years to develop a defecation machine. Food is fed in at one end and it goes through a long series of transparent machines and receptacles which absorb the juices and enzymes necessary for digestion and voilà feces comes out the other end. Delvoye then collects the pungent matter daily and packages it in small jars which he then sells, apparently with much success.

Which all goes to prove that the little old lady who spent a day visiting contemporary art museums was right when she was heard to exclaim, “This all looks like a pile of s _ _ _ to me.”

PLEASE TURN PAGE VERY, VERY CAREFULLY

BEWARE OF : YOU KNOW WHAT



his is a photo of the back end of Delvoye's Defecation Machine. It is 38 feet long and was exhibited in Antwerp, Vienna, Zurich and the New Museum in N.Y.C.

At each of these venues it became a favorite lunch date for lovers. Zagat readers gave it a top rating for ambience.

Rule # 114

NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE EXCESS! An art writer for *Art in America* wrote that:

Telching Hsieh, who came to America as an illegal immigrant from Taiwan in 1974 has ‘already left a record of some of the most brilliant and original Conceptual work in the field of performance art.’

Want to know what he did to deserve such praise? Would you believe he did all of the following?

- 1. Built a cell in his Brooklyn loft and locked himself in for one year, having announced that he would talk to nobody, take nothing to read, no radio or TV and no writing materials. An assistant brought food and disposed of bodily wastes. (Editors note: I wonder whom you have to know to get a cushy job like that.)**
- 2. Punched a time clock every hour on the hour 24 hours a day, for a whole year! He verified his diligence via a video camera that recorded each punch. He missed punching in on time 134 times out of a possible 8,760. The art writer commented: “The record was marvelous enough; the great wonder was that he stayed sane despite missing huge chunks of REM sleep.”**
- 3. Stayed outside for a full year. Well almost. He was locked up by some of New York’s finest - - - who obviously were not attuned to performance art, per se - - - for fighting. This occasioned the art writer to comment that the “police custody for 15 hours was, no doubt the worst moment of the year for him, more than having his vow of staying outside broken than for the terror of an arrest.”**
- 4. Bound himself with a 6-foot rope to a female acquaintance for one year with the accompanying proviso that they would not touch each other.**

Credit must also go to the Jack Tilton/Anna Kustera Gallery in N.Y.C. for exhibiting photos and videos of the artist’s works.

Rule # 115.

TEMPEST IN A TEAPOT. Cornelia Parker, the very fine Brit, used a giant steamroller to flatten silver teapots, cutlery and candlesticks. The art writer described her piece:

After their cartoon-style immolation, she reassembled the pieces as 30 shimmering pools of silver, hanging on fine wires, a foot above the floor, like puddles in the rain.

I decided I couldn't quite match that artist's efforts, so I looked around for the object that seemed to most need a bit of flattening. You can review the results below.



Rule # 116

CREATE A TINY BLURRED PHOTOGRAPH. A world-famous female installation artist turned to photography to produce a picture that got rave reviews from a critic who wrote:

A less heroic work illustrating her concepts was a tiny blurred photograph made by placing a miniature pinhole camera inside her lips and exposing the film using apertures created by various sounds she made. The camera sat in her mouth the border between interior and exterior, between feeling and articulation. The image portrayed was a staring omnipotent eye, a stunning conceptual move that needed no poetic trappings to succeed.

The only way to top this tour de force, I suggest, is to find a different orifice in which to place your camera. Since my readership is a family audience I cannot be more specific --- but I'll give you a hint --- if you have to bend down and look through your legs to see the subject you are on the right track. P.S. that's where sepia prints come from.

Rule # 117

TAKE A HIKE AND BECOME FAMOUS. One very fine Belgian artist found that by walking he not only helped his heart, he became famous.

For almost a decade, he has been "performing" walks in different cities. He wandered through Stockholm wearing an unraveling blue sweater. Outside of Copenhagen he roamed for a week under the influence of a different drug each day. In San Paulo he walked through a part of the city with a can slowly leaking paint."

I think I see him every now and then when I visit New York City.

Rule # 118

CATER TO CURATORS' AND ART CRITICS' INSTINCTS. After wading through all these Rules, I am sure that you have realized there is one overriding perception. Some curators and critics are one step ahead of the man in white coat with the butterfly net. Think back over the weird, sick, depraved, revolting works that have been exhibited by curators and gushed over by art critics.

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The work of art shown below is a fitting way to end this book. It is a photograph I took of Donald Trump's laundry room in Mar-a-Lago. It will be exhibited, along with several other of my other pieces, in Le Louvre next year, and then on to St. Petersburg. Follow my Rules!!!!!!



Role # 119F

FUCK YOUR WAY TO THE TOP. I guess you are surprised that it took so long to get to the most basic Rule of them all. It is a Rule that every Hollywood starlet learns on her first casting call, so why should anybody be surprised that it also applies in the Contemporary Art World. Andrea Fraser is a very well-known artist who may have felt her career need a boost. She found a client, an art collector who remains anonymous, who purchased the right to have sex with her and to be videotaped in the act. An art writer for *ARTFORUM* described the 60-minute (wow) color video described the proceedings:

“The collector lies entirely motionless on the bed in an elegant hotel room. It is not enough that Fraser has sold this piece and by consequence herself to him. No, she also has to work to seduce him ---- but there are some positively tender moments. Even those artists who have exhibitions must often pay for them by fronting their own money, or, as Fraser implies in some other way.”

So, dear reader, after laboriously wading through page after endless page of Rules telling you how to become a famous artist you now realize that if you had only followed your own instincts when that curator at The Whitney put his hand on your knee while he was looking at your portfolio you would be a famous artist.



Rule # 119

TAKE PICTURES AT NUDIST CAMPS. You know the old joke, “It’s a tough job but somebody has to do it.” Well, Justine Kurland decided that the “somebody” was she. She traveled to 13 different rural Hippie communities and asked the inhabitants to pose naked in the landscape (see photo below). Her photos were shown in a London gallery in 2003.



I did the same thing on South Beach (Miami) where “topless” is the dress code of the day. But, no art gallery was willing to exhibit my photos.

So, I opened a website offering views of “South Beach Babes” and I’m getting hundreds of “hits” each day. Every artist has to find his own niche.

Rule # 120

IF YOU CAN'T MAKE IT AS A TIGHTROPE WALKER YOU CAN STILL BE A FAMOUS CONTEMPORARY ARTIST. Janine Antoni is a world-class artist. Her performance piece “To Draw a Line” (in fall 2003) is a perfect example of this Rule. An art writer for *Frieze* magazine wrote that Antoni:

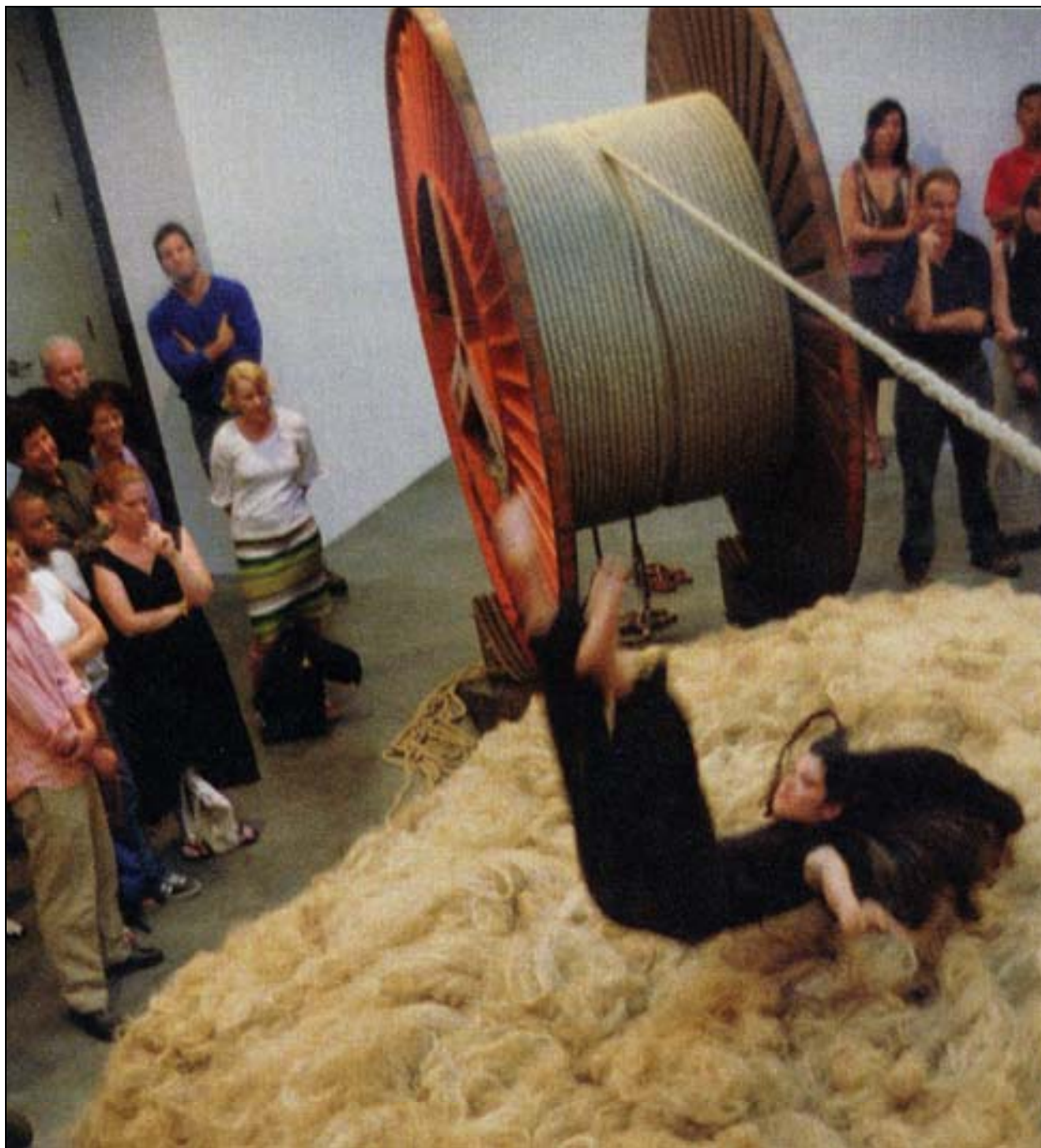
“At a very private opening at the Luhring Augustine Gallery Antoni began by climbing up on the hemp rope she and her assistants had spent months making. She inched forward and eventually reached the unstable midpoint between the huge metal spools across which her rope was drawn (see photo). After some nine minutes she fell off and flipped into a massive cushioning pile of hemp fibre seven and a half feet below. She then rejoined the crowd, to much applause. The performance was not to be repeated during the course of the show.”

I don't know why the performance was not repeated, but I heard she was last seen headed towards Niagara Falls with fins on her feet.

The art writer concluded his review by stating:

“In those brief few minutes in which she was on the rope I saw a range of wonderful scenarios. At one point a perturbed Antoni appeared to swat an insect off her leg. At another she seemed to be waving to a friend as if trying to get their attention. As she regained her balance, her flailing got fainter and fainter, as if she were disappearing into a fog and slowly recognizing the vanity of her effort to be seen.”

PLEASE TURN THE PAGE TO SEE LIFE-DEFYING FEET!



My hand was shaking so much when I took this picture that it is not as sharp as I would have like--- but I think you can appreciate the artist's feet.

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photo courtesy Diane Arbus

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**Every book jacket carries a photo
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